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Hadith and Sufism in Damascus, 627/1230-728/1328 : IbncArabi (d.638/1240), Al-Nawawi (d.676/1277) and Ibn Taymiyya (d.728/1328)

Khogali-Wahbi, Affaf

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**HADĪTH AND ṢŪFISM IN DAMASCUS, 627/1230-
728/1328: IBN CARABĪ (d.638/1240), AL-NAWAWĪ
(d.676/1277) AND IBN TAYMIYYA (d.728/1328)**

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requirements for the degree of
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at King's College London (KQC)
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Abstract

This work is a study of Ḥadīth and Ṣūfism in Damascus from 627/1230 to 728/1328, seen through the lives and works of Ibn ʿArabī, al-Nawawī and Ibn Taymiyya. Its main purpose is to investigate the authenticity of the prophetic traditions used by the Ṣūfīs who lived in Damascus during the above-mentioned period, and to examine the ways in which they used these traditions.

The thesis demonstrates that the flourishing of learning and the promotion of the status of the religious authorities were due mainly to political reasons.

A great number of the traditions which are used by Ibn ʿArabī is found in the canonical collections of ḥadīth. Nevertheless, the number of those which are used by him and are not found in these collections is not negligible. Moreover, some of these traditions are declared fabricated by the ḥadīth-experts. Ibn ʿArabī claims that these traditions were proved authentic to him through "unveiling". For Muslim scholars, this claim cannot be accepted. Even if they are convinced of Ibn ʿArabī's idea of the establishment of the authenticity of ḥadīth through "unveiling", there is still the problem of reaching an agreement among them regarding his trustworthiness. This is not possible. This study also demonstrates that Ibn ʿArabī's interpretations of some traditions are far-fetched. With the exception of one or two cases, the traditions which are used by Nawawī and Ibn Taymiyya are found in the canonical collections. Both scholars were much influenced by Ṣūfism. However, using ḥadīth, there were certain points on which Ibn Taymiyya severely criticised the Ṣūfīs. Nevertheless, he himself is criticised for claiming that certain Ṣūfī concepts and practices are not grounded in the Shariʿa, while there are prophetic traditions supporting them. His interpretation of some traditions is also challenged. Nawawī's course was relatively a middle one. His Ṣūfism was mainly ethical.

*To my family with gratitude,
respect and love.*

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Transliteration System

The iḥrāb is not usually represented except in some passages when more clarity is intended.

a	.....	آ
i	.....	إِ
u	.....	أُ
ā	.....	آ
b	.....	ب
t	.....	ت
th	.....	ث
j	.....	ج
h	.....	ح
kh	.....	خ
d	.....	د
dh	.....	ذ
r	.....	ر
z	.....	ز
s	.....	س
sh	.....	ش
ṣ	.....	ص
ḍ	.....	ض
ṭ	.....	ط
ẓ	.....	ظ
c	.....	ع
gh	.....	غ
f	.....	ف
q	.....	ق
k	.....	ك

l	.....	ل
m	.....	م
n	.....	ن
h	.....	ه
w	.....	و
ū	.....	و
aw	.....	اَ
y	.....	اِ
ī	.....	اِ
ay	.....	اِی

* -i represents the idāfa in Persian words.

Foreword

When quoting the English translation of Ibn ʿArabi's statements from English works -for example those of Chittick, Izutsu and Austin- I have sometimes slightly amended the translation. The same applies to the quotations from the other English translated works, such as The Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim and Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābiḥ of al-Tibrizī.

When more than one work by the same author is referred to in the Thesis, the full title of every work will be given when it is referred to for the first time. After that a shortened title will be given, e.g. the first one or two words of the title.

Abbreviations

E.I.¹ = The Encyclopaedia of Islam, first edition, prepared by a number of leading Orientalists, Leiden, 1913-38.

E.I.² = The Encyclopaedia of Islam, second edition, prepared by a number of leading Orientalists, Leiden, 1960-.

E.R. = The Encyclopedia of Religion, editor in chief Mircea Eliade, New York, 1987.

S.E.I. = Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, ed. H. A. R. Gibb & J. H. Kramer, Leiden, 1974.

Fut = Ibn ʿArabi, al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya, ed. O. Yahya, Cairo, 1972, unless otherwise stated.

Fus = Ibn ʿArabi, Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam, ed. Abu'l-ʿAlā' ʿAffifī, Cairo, 1946.

MRM = Ibn Taymiyya, Majmūʿat al-Rasā'il wa'l-Masā'il, ed. Muḥammad Rashīd Ridā, Beirut, 1983.

MR = Ibn Taymiyya, Majmūʿat al-Rasā'il, Cairo, 1323/1905/6.

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Introduction

0.1. The purpose of the research

The purpose of this study is to investigate the Ḥadīth (traditions) used by the Ṣūfīs who lived in Damascus from 627/1230 to 728/1328. The importance of investigating the traditions used by the Ṣūfīs arises from the fact that it is widely believed that these traditions are not found in the canonical collections. That is to say they are either fabricated (mawḍūʿ) or weak (ḍaʿīf) ones. It is particularly important to investigate this subject in Damascus in this specific period as this is the period during which there lived in Damascus two Muslim scholars, whose names hardly ever do not appear when the subject of Ṣūfism is discussed. The first is Ibn ʿArabī (d.638/1240), "Ṣūfism's greatest systematizer". The second is Ibn Taymiyya (d.728/1328) who is considered the greatest enemy of Ṣūfism. This research, however, shows that he himself was much influenced by Ṣūfism.

During this period also lived Nawawī (d.676/1277). Compared to Ibn ʿArabī and Ibn Taymiyya, Nawawī's attitude towards Ṣūfism can be considered a middle one. It is this middle course that makes it important to include Nawawī in this study.

0.2. A brief definition of Ḥadīth and Ṣūfism

Although it is not the prime concern of this study to investigate the historical process which Ḥadīth and Ṣūfism underwent, this study would seem incomplete without giving a brief definition of the two terms.

0.2.1. Ḥadīth

The literal meaning of the Arabic word ḥadīth is "new". The word was employed for several purposes. For example, it was used for a tale, a piece of information, a report, a story, regardless of their characteristics.¹ With the spread of Islamic teachings ḥadīth has, like many other words, been bounded to a specific

connotation. The word came to mean, "an account of what the prophet said or did, or of his tacit approval of something said or done in his presence".² From this followed the use of the term "tradition" as a translation of ḥadīth. The contents of a ḥadīth came to be known as sunna, which means literally "trodden path". But in its original use sunna meant only "the actual customary practice", or "precedent", regardless of its being Islamic or pre-Islamic, good or bad. In later periods sunna came to mean "the model behaviour of the prophet Muḥammad" -as established by traditions going back to the prophet himself-, and played a significant role as the second source of Muslim jurisprudence (fiqh). But this was after a long historical process.³ Muslim and non-Muslim scholars attribute the credit of introducing the sunna in this new form to al-Shāfiʿī (d.204/820).⁴

The firm relation which al-Shāfiʿī established between the ḥadīth and the sunna resulted in a rapid increase in the number of traditions. A great number of traditions were falsely attributed to the prophet. This gave rise to two significant factors. The first of these was the increase in the number of the formal compilations of ḥadīth. The second was the compilation of biographical notes on the ḥadīth-transmitters, which was the cornerstone in the establishment of the criticism of ḥadīth.

0.2.2. Ṣūfism

Ṣūfism, the equivalent to the Arabic term taṣawwuf, is derived from the term Ṣūfī. According to Muslim sources this term first appeared in the third century A.H./ ninth century A.D. Many etymologies of the term Ṣūfī were offered by the Ṣūfīs themselves. From among these the most possible, but not essentially the definite one, is that it is derived from the Arabic root ṣūf, "wool", to designate the practice of wearing woollen clothes, which symbolised humility. However, this etymology was challenged by another one, presented by Adalbert Merx in 1893. This scholar argued that Ṣūfī comes from the Greek sophos, "wise". Recent research shows that there is no sufficient evidence to prove that the term Ṣūfī

comes from the Greek sophos alone. Therefore, it is possible that this term is from the Arabic ṣūf alone, or is a combination of the Arabic ṣūf and the Greek sophos.⁵

0.3. Thesis plan

The thesis comprises seven Chapters and a Conclusion. Chapter One provides the historical background to this study. It discusses the major historical events in Damascus during the times of Ibn ʿArabī, Nawawī and Ibn Taymiyya. It also examines Damascus as a centre of learning during the period in question.

Chapters Two and Three are devoted to the study of Ibn ʿArabī. Chapter Two studies his life, the sources of ḥadīth used by him -in particular in his works al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya and Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam- and his concept of the establishment of the authenticity of ḥadīth by means of "unveiling" (kashf). Chapter Three examines the ways in which Ibn ʿArabī interprets and applies these ḥadīth.

Chapters Four and Five are devoted to the study of al-Nawawī. Chapter Four studies his life, his main opinions with regard to the sciences of the traditions (ʿulūm al-ḥadīth) and the sources of ḥadīth used by him. Chapter Five examines the ways in which Nawawī interprets and uses these ḥadīth in his discussion of certain Sūfī concepts and practices.

The last two Chapters are concerned with Ibn Taymiyya. Chapter Six examines his life, his main opinions with regard to the acceptance of ḥadīth and the sources of ḥadīth used by him. Chapter Seven investigates Ibn Taymiyya's interpretation of these ḥadīth and the ways in which he uses them, either to support or to criticise and reject certain Sūfī concepts and practices.

The findings of the study are summarised in the Conclusions.

Notes

1. I. Goldziher, Muslim Studies, London, 1971, vol.2, p.3; M. Z. Şiddiqî, Hadîth Literature, Calcutta, 1961, p.1.
2. E.I.², article 'Hadîth'.
3. J. Schacht, The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence, Oxford, 1959, p.58; N. J. Coulson, A History of Islamic Law, Edinburgh, 1964, p.39; A. Guillaume, The Traditions of Islam, Oxford, 1924, p.10.
4. Schacht, op.cit., p.77.
5. Julian Baldick, Mystical Islam, London, 1989, pp.30-2; E.I.¹, article 'Taşawwuf'.

Chapter (1)

Historical Background

1.1. An outline of the principal historical events in Damascus during the times of Ibn ʿArabi, Nawawī and Ibn Taymiyya

The political situation in Damascus during the above-mentioned period was the result of a series of political events which started in 541/1147, when Nūr al-Dīn b. Zankī succeeded his father to the throne in Aleppo. Furthermore, the history of Damascus during this period cannot be dealt with apart from the history of the surrounding territories as they all shared similar circumstances.

To establish his rule, Nūr al-Dīn followed a carefully planned policy which can be summarised as follows: 1. To secure his position in Aleppo and to expand his domains from there so as to control the expansion of the Franks in the Muslim territories. 2. To gain the support of the people in five ways: (a) Pursuit of an aggressive policy against the external enemy, the Franks, and the internal enemy, the Ismāʿīlīs. (b) The abolition of the financial obligations which were imposed upon the people. (c) The encouragement of learning by establishing numerous madrasas (schools/colleges) and founding a corresponding number of pious endowments (waqfs) to support them. (d) The establishment of a large number of mosques and public utilities. (e) The establishment of the supreme court (Dār al-ʿAdl) to look into the complaints of the people against their governors. 3. To put an end to the agony caused by the ambitious emirs by giving them grants of lands (iqṭāʿāt).¹

In 552/1158, "Nūr al-Dīn contracted a severe illness", and consequently he appointed his brothers Nuṣrat al-Dīn Amīr Amīrān (d.560/1165), and Asad al-Dīn Shīrkūh (d.564/1169) to succeed him, the former in Aleppo and the latter in Damascus.² But Shīrkūh was covetous of ruling Egypt. So, when the Franks attacked Egypt in 564, Shīrkūh, being asked for help, led the expedition to Egypt

for the third time, defeated the Franks, and became Vizier to al-^cĀḍid (d.567/1171), the Caliph of Egypt. Shīrkūh died only two months after taking this office, but his office as Vizier to al-^cĀḍid was the corner-stone of the Ayyubid rule.³ In spite of the fact that it was Nūr al-Dīn who appointed Shīrkūh to the Vizierate of Egypt, it is believed that later on the former regretted appointing the latter to this office. Abū Shāma (d.665/1267) suggests that Nūr al-Dīn, who was a Sunni, might have been worried that Shīrkūh, being a Vizier of the Fatimid ruler of Egypt, might convert from the Sunni doctrine to the Fatimid, and betray him.⁴

In 564/1169, Saladin, the general of the Sunni army of Nūr al-Dīn, was appointed to succeed his uncle Shīrkūh as the Vizier of Egypt. Nūr al-Dīn showed dissatisfaction with this appointment, probably for the same reason for which he disliked the appointment of Saladin's uncle to this office.⁵ The conflicts between Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin grew wider. In 569/1175 Nūr al-Dīn made his preparations for an expedition to Egypt. He claimed that he wanted to take possession of Egypt because Saladin had weakened towards the Franks. But Nūr al-Dīn's death, which occurred in the same year, prevented him from completing his mission.⁶

Nūr al-Dīn's son, al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ, succeeded him in Damascus. al-Ṣāliḥ was not capable of shouldering the responsibilities because at that time he had not yet attained the age of majority. Conflicts soon broke out between al-Ṣāliḥ's followers, and the circumstances on the whole caused Saladin to take possession of Damascus in 570/1176.⁷

Nūr al-Dīn was a popular leader, and Saladin followed his policy in all aspects of life in order to gain similar popularity. Soon after being appointed to the Vizierate of Egypt, Saladin developed a strong religious leaning, showed consideration to his relatives, and used a benevolent policy towards the people. As a result, his family was united behind him and the populace gave him their support. This support was the major reason for his success. In a brief period Saladin achieved the unity of Syria, Egypt and Iraq, conquered Palestine and repelled the crusaders. At the same time, he carried on his favourite policy and encouraged

learning in his kingdom.⁸ However, Saladin had Muslim enemies, who believed that he manipulated Islam to win power for himself and his family.⁹

Saladin died in 589/1195,¹⁰ and his death brought about considerable damage to his kingdom. His family began to split up, his sons started to struggle amongst themselves for supremacy, his great officers of state and his faithful mamlūks (slaves) lost their dominating influence. However, there was no serious danger from the crusaders because they had not yet recovered from their last defeat. In the eastern part of the kingdom, Saladin was succeeded by his brother al-^cĀdil (d.615/1217), while in Damascus, Egypt and Aleppo he was succeeded by his sons, al-Afdal (d.622/1224), al-^cAzīz (d.595/1201) and al-Ẓāhir (d.613/1215) respectively.¹¹ Later on, al-^cĀdil succeeded in bringing Egypt and Syria under his control.¹²

al-^cĀdil followed the policy of his predecessors, Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin, and this helped him to retain his domains until his death.

The death of al-^cĀdil was a turning point in the history of this area. In the same year of his death the crusaders launched an attack against Egypt. It was not until 618/1220, when al-^cĀdil's sons put aside their disputes that they succeeded in defeating the enemy.¹³ In 626/1228 a second crusade was launched against Palestine. This crusade resulted in an agreement between the Ayyubids and the crusaders according to which the crusaders took possession of Jerusalem.¹⁴ This provoked the populace beyond endurance.¹⁵ In 646/1248 a third crusade was launched against Egypt. This time it was mainly the Mamlūks who were responsible for overcoming it in 648/1250 and who also put an end to the Ayyubid kingdom. An explanation of this is that as soon as the crusaders were repelled the Mamlūks killed the Ayyubid ruler, Tūran Shāh, and brought to the throne of Egypt al-Mu^cizz Aybak (d.655/1257) who was a mamlūk of al-Ṣālih Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb (d.647/1249). From that time the Mamlūks increased in both number and power.¹⁶

Mention should be made of two other factors in the history of these territories. The first of these is the Khwārizmians, who killed Ṭughrīl, the last

Seljuqid Sultān in Baghdad in (590/1196), and extended their power towards Syria. The second is the Mongols, who in 656/1258 conquered Baghdad, killed the Abbasid Caliph and brought the Abbasids, who had monopolised the Caliphate of Baghdad for five centuries, virtually to an end. The Mongols then extended their rolling attacks upon the Muslim world until they reached as far as Gaza. Again it was the Mamlūks, under the leadership of al-Muzaffar Qutuz, who saved the Muslim world from this imminent danger in the battle of ʿAyn Jālūt on 3 September 1260.¹⁷ This resulted in the expansion of the Mamlūks' kingdom from Egypt to Damascus and Aleppo.¹⁸ However, "the Mongols were to return to Syria in 1261, 1280, 1299, 1301 and 1303."¹⁹

In 658/1260, Qutuz was "murdered by a group of Mamlūk emirs, prominent among whom was Baybars al-Bunduqdārī (d.676/1277)", who then succeeded the former as king of the Mamlūks.²⁰ To secure his throne Baybars followed a policy which can be summarised in the following: 1. He brought the Abbasids back to the Caliphate after a period of three years during which this office had remained unoccupied.²¹ By doing this Baybars gained the Abbasids to his side, and secured himself against any alliance that might have taken place between the latter and the survivors of the Ayyubids. Besides, the existence of the Caliphate, which was regarded as the spiritual authority of the Muslim world, gave the Mamlūk rulers the prestige value of being invested with their rule by a legitimate body. 2. He introduced a reform of the judiciary system in Syria and Egypt, by appointing to the office of the chief judge (qādī al-quḍāt) four judges representing the four dominant schools of law, i.e. the Ḥanafite, the Mālikite, the Shāfiʿite and the Ḥanbalite. Before this reform, this office was held by the Shāfiʿite alone. "Presumably the main purpose of this restructuring...was to weaken the independent power of the Shāfiʿite qādī (judge), though an additional motive may have been to advance the Ḥanafī madhhab (school of law) to which the Mamlūks and most Turks tended to belong."²² 3. He introduced great reforms and improvements in postal services, which enabled him to have firm control over

Syria even while staying in Egypt.²³

The nature of this study does not allow of a detailed investigation of the early Mamlūk Sultanate. However, in order to appreciate better the conditions under which Nawawī and Ibn Taymiyya lived, it is necessary to know something of the Mamlūk regime. The literal meaning of the word mamlūk is slave. However, "in considering the mamlūk institution we should avoid giving it associations which the term slavery may have for us...the mamlūks were first and foremost military slaves. In so far as they performed or could be expected to perform other functions, these were normally of a ceremonial or an administrative nature."²⁴ Earlier we have seen how the Mamlūks put an end to their masters' kingdom, i.e. the Ayyubids kingdom. The Mamlūks' victory over the Mongols in the Battle of ʿAyn Jālūt gained them the support of the populace including the ʿulamā'. Counting on this support, the Mamlūks were able to call up men and to collect money in order to prosecute the holy war (jihād) against the Mongols and the Crusades. The headquarters of the Mamlūks was in Egypt and they were represented by governors in Syria, but in many cases there were conflicts between the latter and the former.²⁵ During the Mamlūk Sultanate there were three distinct classes of the society: 1. The aristocrats' class, which comprised the Sultān and the emirs. It is worthy of note that the members of this class used to settle their disputes not in accordance with Shariʿa law, but in accordance to laws which were supposedly based on "the Mongol law code, the yāsa."²⁶ 2. The ʿulamā' class, which comprised the religious authorities, the judges and the Sūfīs. Many factors participated in the making of this class. The most important of these were the following: (a) The establishment of the schools by the Ayyubids in order to spread Sunni teachings, and at the same time to root out Shiʿite teachings, the latter being the teachings of the Ayyubids' rivals, the Fatimids. (b) The Mamlūks spared no effort to treat the ʿulamā' with great respect and hospitality. Their aim was to gain the latter's support, and at the same time to make Syria and Egypt take the place of Baghdad, which was the centre of Muslim intellectual activities before it was

destroyed by the Mongols. It is noteworthy that during the Mamlūks' rule, and shortly before it, the ʿulamā' depended on salaried teaching posts for a living.²⁷ As a result, the ʿulamā' sought close relations with the rulers in order to get these posts, envied each other because of them, and faced injustice with almost total resignation in order to keep their posts. However, there were exceptional examples of ʿulamā', e.g. Nawawī, ʿIzz al-Dīn b. ʿAbd al-Salām (d.660/1261), and Ibn Taymiyya, who stood against the Mamlūk rulers when they thought that the latter did the people injustice.²⁸

3. The common people. This includes the Syrian Bedouin tribes. Some of the emirs of these tribes were very influential,²⁹ probably because these tribes were based between the territories of the Mamlūks and those of the Mongols. Besides, they played an important role in the Mamlūks victory over the Mongols.³⁰ This class includes also religious minorities, such as the Nuṣayrīs, the Durūze and the Ismāʿīlīs.³¹ It was believed that the harm caused by these groups to Islam was even greater than that caused by Jews and Christians. The holy war was often preached and carried out against them.³²

1.2. Damascus as a centre of learning

A detailed investigation of Damascus as a centre of learning is beyond the scope of this work. However, a brief discussion of the more interesting points on this subject would help to give a clearer picture of the environment which influenced our three scholars.

The encouragement of learning was a policy pursued by the rulers since the time of the Seljūqid Vizier, Nizām al-Mulk (d.485/1092), who established the Nizāmiyya school in Baghdad. The aim of this policy was to create a class of ʿulamā' to support the iqṭāʿ system.³³ Following the policy of Nizām al-Mulk, numerous schools were founded in Syria and Egypt specially during the reigns of Nūr al-Dīn (541-569/1146-1163) and Saladin (570-589/1174-1193).

In the description of his first journey to the east, which took place in 578/1182, Ibn Jubayr (d.614/1216) states that there were about six madrasas in

Aleppo, and twenty in Damascus.³⁴ When this record is compared with another one given by a later historian, Ibn al-Shihna (a 15th century scholar), who gives a record of 54 madrasas in Aleppo,³⁵ it is evident that this period witnessed a rapid increase in the number of the schools.

The establishment of the Nizāmiyya was a turning point in the history of Muslim institutions; nevertheless, it was not the first school to be established. The schools had been originated a long time before this, and since that time they had continued to be Sunni institutions, the purpose of which was on the one hand to spread Sunni teachings, and on the other hand to combat Shi'ism, for which the centres of "Shi'ite propaganda" were working actively.³⁶ However, the origin of the schools cannot be traced to a specific date, but it can be said that the peculiar circumstances of the establishment of the Nizāmiyya marked the beginning of a firm relationship between the schools and the government, the result of which was a resplendent period in the history of Muslim culture.³⁷

In Damascus, the first school in the manner of the Nizāmiyya was founded in 491/1097.³⁸ For years it was impossible to continue the expansion of the schools because of the internal disputes and the struggle against the Franks, and it was not until the time of Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin that the city gained its high reputation as a centre of learning. The Mamlūks followed on the footsteps of Nūr al-Dīn and Saladin. A record of Damascus schools made by al-Nu'aymī (d.927/1521) gives us a total of a hundred and fifty five schools, all of which existed in the seventh century.³⁹

It is worthy of note that the number of schools of Hanafi and Shafi'i law was greater than others. The wide spread of the schools of Hanafi law was probably due to the fact that Nūr al-Dīn and most of the Mamlūks were Hanafis.⁴⁰ As for the dominance of the schools of Shafi'i law, it is quite clear that it was due to Saladin's enthusiasm for the school of al-Shafi'i. The surest evidence of this is that soon after being appointed to the Vizierate of Egypt, Saladin appointed to the office of chief judge the Shafi'i jurist, 'Abd al-Malik b. Dirbās (d.605/1208), who

subsequently appointed his deputies from among the followers of al-Shāfi'ī.⁴¹ Saladin's command to obliterate a work on Hanafi law in which the author, Ibn Abī Ya'īsh (d.615/1218) spoke ill of the Shāfi'īs is yet another proof of the former's enthusiasm for the Shāfi'īs.⁴²

In the light of the subjects which were studied by Nawawī, Ibn Taymiyya and some of their contemporaries it seems that the study of the Qur'ān and ḥadīth formed the pivot on which the other subjects turned. The study of fiqh enjoyed the highest popularity. In view of the fact that the language of both the Qur'ān and ḥadīth is Arabic, subjects such as naḥw (syntax), taṣrīf (morphology), and luḡa (lexicography) were taught to help in understanding their meanings. The ansāb (Arab tribal genealogies) were also taught to facilitate the verification of the transmission of ḥadīth. Next to these there were uṣūl al-fiqh (principles of jurisprudence), and uṣūl al-dīn (theology). It should be added that medicine (ṭibb) was also studied; nevertheless, it did not enjoy the same popularity as the other subjects. The same applies to mathematics (ḥisāb).

As for Ṣūfism, the main tradition of Islamic mysticism, it had a great effect on Muslim life in the middle ages. This effect was mirrored in the actions of common people as well as the governors. Some institutions of learning, as will be seen, were specially founded for the Ṣūfīs. Describing the status of the Ṣūfīs in Damascus, Ibn Jubayr states, "The Ṣūfīs are the kings in this city."⁴³ The surest evidence of the great influence of the Ṣūfīs is an incident which happened at the time of Nūr al-Dīn, and is related by Ibn Jubayr as follows:

"From among the properties of the Ṣūfīs (in Damascus), the greatest is a building called the palace. It is a great lofty edifice...with a great garden, and it used to be a promenade of one of the Turkish maliks (warlords). It is said that one night this warlord was in that palace when a group of Ṣūfīs passed the palace, and some of the wine which was served therein was spilled over them. The Ṣūfīs complained to Nūr al-Dīn of the incident. Consequently, Nūr al-Dīn did not cease to persuade the owner to assign the palace to him until the former did so. Then Nūr al-Dīn officially designated the palace as an everlasting religious endowment for the Ṣūfīs."⁴⁴

The close relations which Ibn ʿArabī had with some of the rulers of his time, and the difficulties which Ibn Taymiyya experienced because of his attacks on some of the Ṣūfīs, e.g. Naṣr al-Manbijī, the Ṣūfī master of Baybars al-Jāshnakīr, are yet more proofs of the high status and the great influence of the Ṣūfīs during this period.⁴⁵

Although many scholars, among whom is Nawawī, are reported to have attended and delivered lectures on works such as al-Risāla of al-Qushayrī (d.465/1072), and ʿAmal al-Yawm wa'l-Layla of Ibn al-Sunni (d.364/975),⁴⁶ it seems that such works were not studied in the name of taṣawwuf. For example, the preceding works are included among the books studied by al-Nawawī; nevertheless, taṣawwuf is not mentioned among the subjects that he studied.⁴⁷ This makes it probable that taṣawwuf was not an independent school subject as the former subjects were.

Philosophical studies were interdicted.⁴⁸ This was in conformity with the teachings of Sunni Islam.⁴⁹ Nawawī is reported to have given a juristic opinion in which he says that the study of philosophy is ḥarām (prohibited).⁵⁰ Even in later periods the Sunni attitude towards philosophy did not change. Ibn Taymiyya often attacked the philosophers.⁵¹ Tāj al-dīn al-Subkī, a scholar of the eighth/fourteenth century, condemns those who study philosophy and calls them "mubtadiʿūn" (innovators).⁵²

The schools were classified into two types: 1. Schools for young boys (madāris al-ṣibyān). The course of study in these schools was memorising the Qur'ān and practising calligraphy (khatt).⁵³ 2. Schools for adults. For these I would prefer to use the word "college" chosen by Makdisi in his work The Rise of Colleges.⁵⁴ The course of study in these schools (colleges) was elective. The fact that the founders of these colleges enjoyed absolute freedom in the arrangement of all the affairs of their foundations played a considerable part in the lack of a fixed course of study.⁵⁵ After being registered in a certain college the student was free to choose his own course of study and was also free to attend the lectures of any

professor he admired. Furthermore, a student registered in a college of law designated for the followers of one of the four schools of law, for example the Shāfiʿīs, could attend lectures in another college of law designated for the followers of one of the other three schools of law. For instance, Abū Shāma and Nawawī were both regular students of Shāfiʿī colleges of law. In addition, the former received ijāzas (licences) from Hanbalī professors such as Ibn Qudāma (d.620/1223),⁵⁶ and the latter studied under the direction of the Hanbalī scholar, Ibn Abī ʿUmar (d.682/1283).⁵⁷

In spite of the lack of a fixed course of study, it is possible to distinguish two main types of study: First, the multiple study, to which belonged the students who studied many subjects without concentrating on a specific subject more than the others. Various examples of scholars who received this type of study are found in the biographical works relative to the period in question, which suggests that this type enjoyed more popularity. Secondly, the specialised study, which can be sub-divided into two types: (a) Specialisation in a certain field. An example of scholars with such qualifications is Khālīd b. Yūsuf (d.663/1264), who specialised in ḥadīth.⁵⁸ (b) Specialisation in a certain work. An example of scholars with such qualifications is Abu 'l-Yumn al-Kindī (d.613/1216), who was specialised in al-Mufaṣṣal, a grammatical work by al-Zamakhsharī (d.538/1143).⁵⁹ Some scholars combined the two types of study. An example of these is al-Nawawī, as will be seen. However, even these specialised scholars had received general studies as a background, which enabled them to choose a certain subject or work to specialise in.

There were two methods of teaching. The first of these was teaching by lecturing and memorising (talqīn). This method was originally applied to the study of the Qur'ān, where the students were not allowed to write down Qur'ānic verses. A justification of this is given by Ibn Jubayr who says in this connection: "This is meant to keep the Qur'ān free from blemish caused by young boys as they obliterate and write down the Qur'ānic words (because they were not yet skilled in

calligraphy)."60 This method was also of great importance to the study of ḥadīth. After committing the Qur'ān to memory it was also the custom for the student to memorise as many traditions as he could.⁶¹ Memorisation was also used in other fields. al-Ruḥaynī (d.502/1108) is reported to have said, "If the works of al-Shāfiʿī were to be destroyed by fire, I would be able to dictate their contents from memory."⁶² Nawawī is also reported to have committed to memory some works on Shāfiʿī law.⁶³

The other method was dictation. This method was highly preferred in the study of ḥadīth,⁶⁴ as a natural sequence of the fact that keeping the exact words was of the utmost importance. The circles of learning owe many benefits to the use of this method. First, it must have led to more accuracy in work on the part of both the teacher and the student. An explanation of this is that the copies written by the students could serve as evidence of the teacher's knowledge, and at the same time the natural competitiveness of the group would stimulate a desire for greater accuracy in production among the students. Secondly, finding themselves in no need of concentrating on memorisation, the students found the chance for other activities, such as commenting on what they had written. Thirdly, the availability of many copies of the work must have made the task of the students of later periods much easier.

After becoming skilled in a specific subject or a specific work, the student would be granted a degree called ijāza. The granting of ijāza meant the granting of a permit or a licence to teach.⁶⁵ The origin of this concept goes back to the prophet himself, who, according to Muslim belief, after having received the Qur'ān, and being taught the religion of Islam by God, was authorised to pass down this knowledge to his companions: "We have sent down this reminder to thee that thou mayest expound to people Allāh's commandments that have been sent down to them through thee, and that they may reflect over them."⁶⁶ The companions were also authorised to pass this information to the next generation: "Call to mind when Allāh took a covenant from those who were given the book: You shall make

it known to the people and shall not conceal it",⁶⁷ and so forth.

Mention should be made of other institutions of learning which existed in Damascus in the period in question. These can be divided into two categories: 1. Institutions within the mosque, which can be sub-divided into : (a) Ḥalqas (study circles), the function of which did not differ much from that of the colleges. (b) Zāwiyas (schools in mosques): their function was also similar to that of the colleges. (c) Sab^ḥs, the term sab^ḥ (Pl. asbāḥ) refers to the Qur'ān. According to Ibn Jubayr, every morning and evening the students of each Sab^ḥ used to recite one of the seven sections of the Qur'ān (asbāḥ al-Qurān). (d) Taṣdīrs (discussion groups with a leader who is called a mutaṣaddir because he occupies the foremost place). The last two were mainly designated for the study of the Qur'ān.⁶⁸ In addition to these four, Ibn Jubayr adds a fifth type of institution. This is that of the sāriyas (columns built within the mosque: each teacher would lecture on the Qur'ān while resting his back against one of these columns). They were also specialised in the study of the Qur'ān, but they were characterised by the designation of a teacher for every student.⁶⁹

2. Institutions independent of the mosque. These can be sub-divided into the following: (a) Hospitals (māristāns). In addition to their natural function (medical treatment), the hospitals were also used as schools of medicine.⁷⁰ (b) Ribāts (lodges). They were designated primarily to teach Ṣūfism; later on (about the sixth/twelfth century), the study of fiqh became a part of their function.⁷¹ (c) Khānqas or khawāniq (centres of mystical activity): They were also Ṣūfī institutions. According to Ibn Jubayr the khānqas and the ribāts differed in name only.⁷²

Mention should be made of the libraries, which constituted institutions of learning in the sense that they provided the students with the books which they needed to consult. So far, there is only one case in which teaching is reported to have taken place in a library in Basra, but this is an exceptional case.⁷³ In the description of the great mosque of Damascus, Ibn Jubayr mentions a big library to

which he gives the name khizāna (treasury).⁷⁴ Besides, there were many libraries, all of which owe their existence to religious endowments (waqfs).⁷⁵

The institutions of learning, the teachers, and the students owe a great deal to the law of waqf. Alongside the institutions of learning, the founders also established numerous religious endowments to meet the needs of these institutions.⁷⁶ The number of religious endowments in Damascus was very large, to the extent that made Ibn Jubayr state, "The city (Damascus) is almost entirely taken up with waqfs."⁷⁷

The objects of waqfs were gardens (basātīn), lands (ard baydā'), or residences (ribāḥ).⁷⁸ In some cases the incumbent professors of specific colleges were also given the responsibility of the administration of the waqfs belonging to these colleges, and the distribution of their income among the beneficiaries.⁷⁹ Some professors are reported to have made unlawful wealth out of the administration of these waqfs.⁸⁰

The students were the greatest beneficiaries of the waqfs. Damascus institutes were specially noted for providing a comparatively easy life for the students. For this reason Ibn Jubayr called upon the rising generation in Spain to journey to Damascus for the sake of knowledge. He says in this connection:

"He who wishes himself success from the rising generation of our land should journey to this land (Damascus) for the sake of knowledge. Then he will surely find a great many means of assistance. The first of these means is that his mind will not be occupied with worries about living, which is the greatest and the most important assistance."⁸¹

To sum up, one may say that the religious awakening, in which the Crusades and the Mongols played a great part, the attitude of the governors towards education and the men of learning, the iqṭāḥ system, which created a wealthy class which participated in the founding of the schools, the anti-Shi'ism movement, and the religious endowments were all effective factors in the flourishing of learning during this period.

1.3. Notes

1. Abū Shāma, al-Rawḍatayn fī Akhbār al-Dawlatayn, Cairo, 1287-8/1871, vol.1, pp.5-8.
2. Gibb, H. A. R., The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades, extended and translated from the Chronicle of Ibn al-Qalānisi, London, 1932, p.341.
3. Abū Shāma, al-Rawḍatayn, vol.1, pp.154-60.
4. Ibid., vol.1, p.172.
5. Ibid., vol.1, p.173.
6. Ibid., vol.1, pp.173-227.
7. Ibid., vol.1, p.236.
8. Ibid., vol.1, pp.236-69.
- To some modern writers Saladin's success was mainly due to " his identification with conventional emotion". See M. C. Lyons and D. E. P. Jackson, Saladin, Cambridge, 1982, pp.373-4.
9. Ibid., p.365.
10. Abū Shāma, al-Rawḍatayn, vol.2, p.213.
11. Ibid., vol.2, pp.224-33.
12. Ibid., vol.2, pp.230-6.
13. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya wa'l-Nihāya, Cairo, 1358/1938, vol.13, p.95.
14. Ibid., vol.13, p.123.
15. On behalf of the governor of Damascus, Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī lamented the loss of Jerusalem in the presence of a big crowd of people who came to show their grief; see Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zamān, Hayderabad, 1951, vol.8, Part.2., p.954.
16. Yūsuf b. Taghrībīrdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, Cairo, 1938, vol.7, pp.3-5.
17. Ibid., vol.7, pp.77-9.
18. Ibid., vol.7, p.83.
19. Robert Irwin, The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk

Sultanate 1250-1382, London, 1986, p.34.

20. Ibid., pp.34 and 37.

21. Ibn Taghribirdī, op.cit., vol.7, p.110.

22. Irwin, op.cit., p.43.

23. Khowaiter Abdul-Aziz, Baybars the First, London, 1978, pp.42-3; for a detailed investigation on this subject see Sauvaget (Jean), La Poste aux chevaux dans l'empire des Mamlouks, Paris, 1941, pp.10-41.

24. Ibid., pp.3-4.

25. For example, when the governor of Damascus cleared Ibn Taymiyya from the accusations which were raised against him because of his treatise of faith, al-Wāṣitiyya, the Mamlūk ruler in Egypt was not happy with the outcome of this trial. So Ibn Taymiyya was ordered to come to Cairo, put on trial, found guilty and imprisoned. See Chap.6, p.179.

26. al-Maqrīzī, Aḥmad b. ʿAlī, al-Khitāṭ, Beirut, 1959, vol.1, pp.187-9; Irwin, op.cit., p.52.

According to David Morgan, there is no sufficient evidence to believe that Chingiz Khan instituted the Yāsa. Whether it is proved that the Yāsa existed, or not, this will not affect the historical evidence which shows that the Mamlūk aristocrats were not subjected to Shariʿa law. See David Morgan, The Mongols, Oxford, 1986, pp.96-9.

27. When one studies the biographies of traditionists who lived before the end of the sixth century, one will notice that unlike those who lived afterwards, these traditionists had titles such as "al-Zajjāj" (glazier), "al-Ṣā'igh" (jeweller) and so forth. This indicates that they used to engage in these trades and to depend on them for a living.

28. When ʿIzz al-Dīn b. ʿAbd al-Salām died, Baybars al-Bunduqdārī is reported to have said, "Only now has my throne been secured for me." See al-Subkī, Tabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyya al-Kubrā, Cairo, 1324/1904, vol.5, p.84.

For more information about the formation of the class of ʿulamā' see

Sourdel (Dominique), Medieval Islam, London, 1983, pp.150-4.

29. For example, Muhannā b. ʿĪsā, who once freed Ibn Taymiyya; see Chap.6, p.179.
30. Irwin, op.cit., p.33.
31. See E.I.², articles 'Durūz' and 'Ismāʿīliyya'; E.I.¹, article 'Nuṣayrī'.
32. Irwin, op.cit., pp.49-50.

See for example Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on these sects in his Majmūʿ Fatawā Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyya, Riyad, 1381-3/1961-3, vol.2, p.130 and vol.29, pp.478-80.

33. Lewis, Historians of the Middle East, London, 1962, pp.79-80.
34. Ibn Jubayr, Rihlat Ibn Jubayr, ed. William Wright, London, 1907, p.253.
35. Muḥammad b. al-Shihna, al-Durr al-Muntakhab, Beirut, 1909, pp.109-24.
36. Lewis, op.cit., p.80.
37. E.I.², article 'Madrasa'.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.; al-Nuʿaymī, al-Dāris fī Tārīkh al-Madāris, vol.1, Damascus, 1948, pp.662-4 and vol.2, Damascus, 1951, pp.828-32.
40. Abū Shāma, al-Rawdatayn, vol.1, pp.6-13.
41. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.12, p.263.
42. ʿImād al-Dīn (?), 'al-Bustān al-Jāmiʿ li Jamīʿ Tawārīkh al-Zamān', ed. C. Cahen, in Bulletin d' Études Orientales, vols.7-8, 1937-8, p.144.
43. Ibn Jubayr, op.cit., p.248.
44. Ibid., pp.284-5.
45. See Chap.2, pp.38 and 39; Chap.6, pp.179-80.
46. Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār, Tuḥfat al-Ṭalibīn fī Tarjamat Shaykhinā al-Imām al-Nawawī, MS., Tübingen, No.18, folio 3^b; cf. W. Ahlwardt, Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin: vol.21: Verzeichniss der arabischen Handschriften, part.9, Berlin, 1897, p.496.
47. Ibid., folios 7^a-7^b.

48. E.I.², article 'Madrasa'.
49. Lewis, op.cit., pp.80-1.
50. E. M. Sartain, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, Cambridge, 1975, vol.1, p.33.
51. Ibn Taymiyya, Majmūʿat al-Rasā'il wa'l-Masā'il, ed. Muḥammad R. Riḍā, Beirut, 1983, vol.1, pp.203-4.
52. Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, Muʿīd al-Niʿam wa Mubīd al-Niqam, Leiden, 1908, p.113.
53. Ibn Jubayr, op.cit., pp.272-3.
54. George Makdisi , The Rise of Colleges, Edinburgh, 1981, pp.1 and 32-4.
55. Ibid., p.80.
56. Abū Shāma, al-Dhayl ʿalā al-Rawḍatayn, Cairo, 1366/1947, p.139.
57. Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār, op.cit., folio 7^b.
58. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.246.
59. Abū Shāma, al-Dhayl, p.95.
60. Ibn Jubayr, op.cit., p.272.
61. E.I.², article 'Madrasa'.
62. Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, p.100.
63. See Chap.4, p.122.
64. Nawawī, al-Taqrīb wa'l-Taysīr, Cairo, 1972, vol.2, p.132.
65. Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, p.140.
66. The Qur'ān, 16:44.
67. The Qur'ān, 3:187.
68. Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, pp.19-20 and 203.
69. Ibn Jubayr, op.cit., p.272; Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, pp.20 and 203.
70. Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, p.27.
71. Ibid., p.10.
72. Ibn Jubayr, op.cit., p.284.
73. Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, pp.26-7.
74. Ibid., pp.24-5.

75. For example, when Nūr al-Dīn founded the schools in Damascus he also supported these schools with a great number of books as religious endowments for the seekers of knowledge; see Abū Shāma, al-Rawḍatayn, op.cit., vol.1, p.5.

Some of the ʿulamā' also left their works as religious endowments for the seekers of knowledge; see E.I.², article 'Madrasa'.

76. Abū Shāma, al-Rawḍatayn, vol.1, pp.5 and 268.

77. Ibn Jubayr, op.cit., p.275.

78. Ibid., p.275.

79. For example, Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Maqdisī (d.686/1287); see al-Nuʿaymī, op.cit., vol.1, pp.269-70.

80. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Maqdisī is reported to have been arrested because of his dishonesty in the administration of the waqfs; see al-Nuʿaymī, op.cit., vol.1, pp.269-70.

81. Ibn Jubayr, op.cit., p.285.

Chapter (2)

Ibn ʿArabi

Life and Hadith

2.1. Life

2.1.1. Sources of information

Ibn ʿArabi is a famous Muslim mystic in Muslim and non-Muslim academic circles alike. His life has been studied by scholars from both circles. However, the most important sources for the study of his life are his own works, where he has provided many information. A comprehensive study by Claude Addas, has studied the above-mentioned sources and analysed and brought together the scattered details of this great Muslim thinker's life.

2.1.2 Name, titles and agnomen

Ibn ʿArabi's full name is Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-ʿArabi al-Ḥatimi al-Ṭā'i.¹ He is a descendant of an Arab family. His surnames al-Ḥatimi, al-Ṭā'i are derived from the name of his ancestor Ḥatim al-Ṭā'i, a popular historical figure, who was proverbially generous, and is still quoted as an example of generosity.² His name is usually pronounced without "the definite article 'al'", to distinguish him from the famous jurist, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-ʿArabi (d.543/1148).³ In Andalusia, however, he was known as Ibn Surāqa.⁴ Ibn ʿArabi was given many titles, from among them the most famous are, Muḥyi al-Dīn, "meaning literally 'revivifier of religion'"; and al-Shaykh al-Akbar ("Doctor maximus").⁵ He has two kunyas (agnomens), Abū Bakr and Abū ʿAbd Allāh, but the former is used more frequently than the latter.⁶

2.1.3. Early life in Spain

Ibn ʿArabi was born at Murcia on the 17th of Ramaḍān, 560/29th of July, 1165.⁷ His birth coincides with the death of the celebrated shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlāni, who is alleged to have foretold his birth and the high spiritual status that

he would enjoy among the Ṣūfīs.⁸

The sources tell us that Ibn ʿArabī's family was influential and wealthy, and it seems that his father was literally well educated.⁹ These factors provided Ibn ʿArabī with a chance of good education. In 568/1172, his father took him to Seville to obtain formal education.¹⁰

There he studied the traditional Islamic subjects under the supervision of skilled and well-known Muslim scholars.

Ibn ʿArabī's family was Sunni. In particular they were followers of Mālik's school of jurisprudence.¹¹ Thus it was natural that he would start on the same line. However, he is said to have shown a strong inclination to Ṣūfism at a very early age. This was also natural, as we know from the sources that his father had some contact with the Ṣūfīs and the philosophers. Besides, Seville was one of the centres of Ṣūfism and the home of many great Ṣūfīs, who would naturally influence the formation of Ibn ʿArabī's personality.¹² By the time that he was twenty years old, Ibn ʿArabī started the Ṣūfī's sulūk ("wayfaring") under the direction of his first Ṣūfī master, al-ʿUraybī.¹³

It is noteworthy that two Ṣūfī women were among the Ṣūfīs who directed Ibn ʿArabī at the early stage of his spiritual life. These were Shams of Marchena and Fāṭima bint al-Muthannā. As regards Ibn ʿArabī this is not astonishing. He often quotes the prophetic tradition, "Many men reached the stage of perfection, while no woman reached such a stage except Mary, the daughter of ʿImrān, and Āsiya, the wife of Pharaoh." (Bukhārī & Muslim)¹⁴ Then he argues that by this tradition the prophet declared that some women are spiritually as perfect as some men.¹⁵

It was also at the age of twenty when Ibn ʿArabī started travelling. He visited many places in Spain and North Africa.¹⁶ During these journeys he met many famous Ṣūfīs and Muslim scholars, and he had many visions and extraordinary encounters. Of particular importance is his encounter with Averroes (Ibn Rushd), during the young mystic's visit to Cordova, as it shows that Ibn

ʿArabi's doctrine is different from that of Averroes, i.e., "the scholastic current of authentic Aristotelianism in Islamic philosophy."¹⁷ It also shows that Ibn ʿArabi had great self-confidence since a very early age. This encounter is cited by Ibn ʿArabi and translated by R. W. J. Austin as follows:

"I spent a good day in Cordova at the house of Abu'l-Walid Ibn Rushd...I was at the time a beardless youth. As I entered the house the philosopher rose to greet me with all the signs of friendliness and affection, and embraced me. Then he said to me 'Yes!' and showed pleasure on seeing that I understood him. I, on the other hand being aware of the motive for his pleasure, replied, 'No'. Upon this Ibn Rushd drew back from me. He then put to me the following question, 'What solution have you found as a result of mystical illumination and divine inspiration? Does it coincide with what is arrived at by speculative thought?' I replied, 'Yes and no. Between the Yea and the Nay the spirits take their flight beyond matter, and the necks detach themselves from their bodies.' At this Ibn Rushd became pale and I saw him tremble as he muttered the formula, 'There is no power save from God.' This was because he had understood my allusion."¹⁸

2.1.4. Years of extensive travelling in the Muslim East

When he was almost in his mid-thirties, Ibn ʿArabi decided to leave his home land to the Muslim East. It seems that the main reason behind this decision was the strong opposition to his teaching in the Muslim West (Spain and North Africa). Besides, he tells us that in 597/1200, while in the Maghrib, he saw a vision in which he was directed to leave to the Muslim East.¹⁹ It is worthy of note that visions and dreams are of great importance in Ibn ʿArabi's doctrine. Ibn Sawdakī quotes Ibn ʿArabi as having said:

"A man must endeavour to have presence of mind in dreams so that he may be the master of his thoughts, which he has gathered as a result of reasoning, even in sleep as in waking. If a man gets this presence of mind and makes it become a part of his habit he will get its fruit in the barzakh ("interface", the "world of the image (ʿālam al-mithāl)" in between this world and the world of ideas) and be highly benefited by it."²⁰

In 598/1201 he arrived in Mecca for the first time to perform the Pilgrimage (hajj). There he was received with great hospitality by the family of Abū Shujāʿ

Ẓāhir b. Rustum al-Isfahānī, a shaykh of Iranian origin who settled in Mecca and occupied an influential position there. This Shaykh had a daughter who had great spiritual influence on Ibn ʿArabi. Inspired by her he wrote his famous collection of mystical odes, Tarjumān al-Ashwāq, meaning literally ("The Interpreter of Ardent Longings").²¹ To the ordinary reader this work is nothing more than ordinary love poems full of material description of the beloved. Thus it provided Ibn ʿArabi's opponents with the evidence that they needed to accuse him of immorality. Later, however, he wrote an interpretation, i.e., Dhakhā'ir al-Aʿlāq, in which he interpreted away the literal meanings of Tarjumān al-Ashwāq, and thereby defended himself against his opponents' accusation.

Earlier Ibn ʿArabi experienced a similar spiritual love with Fāṭima. Describing this Fāṭima, who was one of his spiritual leaders he says:

"When I met her she was in her nineties and only ate the scraps left by people at their doors. Although she was so old and ate so little, I was almost ashamed to look at her face when I sat with her, it was so rosy and soft."²²

The two spiritual love experiences have an important connection with Ibn ʿArabi's mystical consideration of the female and her significance in his concept of the "unity of existence". This is clearly seen in his interpretation of the prophetic tradition, "Three things have been made beloved to me in this world of yours: Women, perfume and my solace was made to be in prayer."²³

Among the important events that took place during Ibn ʿArabi's stay in Mecca is a "heralding vision" which he saw for himself in 599/1202. This vision meant to him that he was "the ultimate Seal of God's Friends in the period inaugurated by Muḥammad".²⁴ In Mecca also, he started writing the longest and one of the two most important amongst his works, al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya ("The Meccan Revelations").²⁵ The other work being Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam ("The Bezels of Wisdom"), which he wrote in a later stage. In 601/1204 Ibn ʿArabi made two journeys, one to the prophet's tomb in Medina, the other to Jerusalem.²⁶ In the

same year he left for Baghdad, where he stayed for twelve days. Then he left for Mosul, where he met ^ʿAlī b. ^ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Jāmī^ʿ, who invested him with the Ṣūfī khirqa ("patched frock") for the third time.²⁷ Before this he was invested with the Ṣūfī khirqa in Seville in 580/1184 and in Mecca in 599/1202.²⁸ This indicates that he received it "as a form of blessing, which might be bestowed by a hundred masters on one Ṣūfī."²⁹ In Mosul he also composed his work al-Tanazzulāt al-Muṣiliyya (The Mosul Revelations).

In 603/1206 Ibn ^ʿArabī arrived in Cairo, where his teaching aroused much hostility.³⁰ In 604/1207-1208 he returned to Mecca, where he pursued his study of ḥadīth. From Mecca he headed for Asia Minor (Turkey). He arrived in Konya in 607/1210. His visit to Konya was of much benefit to him. On the one hand, he was given an enthusiastic reception by the ruler Kay Kā'ūs (d.616/1219) and the populace. This ruler is said to have ordered for him a residence worth 100,000 dirhams. However, we are told that Ibn ^ʿArabī offered this residence to a beggar, telling him that he had nothing else to offer.³¹ On the other hand, Ibn ^ʿArabī met for the first time his closest disciple Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d.632/1234). The result of this meeting was:

"Ṣadr al-Dīn himself, in later years, became a major exponent of Ibn ^ʿArabī's teachings and has left many important commentaries on his master's works. What is more significant is that he became the link between the great Andalusian master and many of the greatest representatives of Persian Ṣūfism, notably Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī."³²

Ibn ^ʿArabī visited many cities in Asia Minor, spreading his teachings and attracting many disciples. In 608/1211 he arrived in Baghdad, where he met the well-known Ṣūfī master Shihāb al-Dīn ^ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī (d.632/1234), author of ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif. During this meeting we are told:

"Both of them bowed their heads for an hour without uttering a word to each other and then parted. When Ibn ^ʿArabī was asked his opinion of al-Suhrawardī he said, 'He is imbued from head to foot with the norm of the prophet.' When asked for his opinion on Ibn ^ʿArabī, al-Suhrawardī said,

'He is an ocean of divine truths.'"33

In 609/ 1212 Kay Kā'ūs sent to Ibn ʿArabī, seeking his advice on the treatment of Christian subjects, and inviting him to come to Anatolia. The latter advised the former in writing, and it was not until 612/1215 that Ibn ʿArabī came to Anatolia, after he had visited Aleppo in 610/1213, and Mecca in 611/1214.³⁴ Between 612/1215-616/1219 he lived mostly in Malatya, teaching his disciples and giving them ijāzas (certificates) on his works. From 617/1220 to 618/1221 he was in Aleppo.³⁵ The good relations that Ibn ʿArabī had with the Ayyubid rulers of Aleppo explain the former's frequent visits to this city. It is said that al-Malik al-Zāhir (d.613/1216) gave Ibn ʿArabī a house in Aleppo, and the latter is believed to have had great influence on the former.³⁶ Ibn ʿArabī's collaboration with this ruler and others seems to have caused tension between him and some jurists and theologians. This is evident in some of Ibn ʿArabī's statements with which he countered the attacks of his opponents.³⁷ The sources tell us that in 620/1223 he went to Damascus and settled there until he died.

2.1.5. In Damascus

The good relations that Ibn ʿArabī had with the ruler of Damascus, al-Malik al-Ashraf (d.635/1237), son of al-Malik al-ʿĀdil, the great respect showed to him by the influential jurists of this city, in particular the family of jurists of Ibn al-Zakī, who defended his teachings,³⁸ and the generous subsidies given him³⁹ helped to make the period during which he stayed in Damascus the most productive period of Ibn ʿArabī's life. The chief judge of Mālik's school of law gave him his daughter in marriage.⁴⁰ Opposition to his teaching was relatively weak, and in general his life in Damascus was stable and fruitful. He dedicated his time to teaching and writing an enormous quantity of works. It was during this period that he completed and revised his work al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya. According to Addas, he finished the first version in Ṣafar 629/1231, in 632/1234-35 he started revising it, and in 24 Rabiʿ 1 636/1238 he finished the second version.⁴¹ It was also during

this period that he wrote his famous work Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam. Ibn ʿArabī claims that the contents of this work were handed down to him directly from the prophet Muḥammad in a "heralding vision" in 627/1229.⁴² Besides, he completed writing his collection of mystical poems entitled al-Diḥwān al-Akbar.⁴³

Ibn ʿArabī died in Damascus in 22 Rabiʿ II 638/Nov 1240, in the house of Ibn al-Zakī (d.668/1270). He was buried in the tomb of the family of Ibn al-Zakī "on the slopes of Mount Qāsiyūn".⁴⁴ The Ottoman ruler Selim I (d.926/1520) rebuilt Ibn ʿArabī's tomb, constructed the Ṣālihiyya School nearby, and gave some of his properties as religious endowments (awqāf), the income of which should be used to keep Ibn ʿArabī's tomb in good condition.⁴⁵

Regarding Ibn ʿArabī's wives the sources mention three: 1. Maryam of Seville, whom Ibn ʿArabī refers to as al-mar'a al-ṣāliḥa (the righteous woman).⁴⁶ 2. Fāṭima bint Yūnus of Mecca, the mother of ʿImād al-Dīn.⁴⁷ 3. The daughter of the chief Mālikī judge of Damascus, whose name is unknown.⁴⁸ Of his children we know about two sons and a daughter: 1. ʿImād al-Dīn Muḥammad (d.667/1268).⁴⁹ He was buried near his father. 2. Saʿd al-Dīn Muḥammad, the poet who was born at Malatya in 618/1221 and died in Damascus in 656/1258. He was also buried near his father.⁵⁰ 3. Zaynab, about whom all we know is that her father claims that she was a miraculously intelligent child.⁵¹

2.1.6. Teachers

Ibn ʿArabī was skilled in the traditional Muslim sciences under the direction of many Muslim scholars. From among them the most frequently mentioned by his biographers are: 1. Abū Bakr b. Khalaf al-Lakhmī (d.585/1189). Under his direction Ibn ʿArabī learned the Qur'ān and the seven manners of its recitation, punctuation and vocalisation (al-qirā'āt al-sabʿ). The former handed down to the latter Kitāb al-Kāfi, a work on al-qirā'āt al-sabʿ by Muḥammad b. Shurayḥ al-Ishbīlī (d.476/1083).⁵²

2. Abu'l-Qāsim al-Sharrāṭ (d.586/1190), under whose direction Ibn ʿArabī studied

the above-mentioned Kitāb al-Kāfi.⁵³

3. Abū Bakr b. Abī Jamra (d.599/1202). Under his direction Ibn ʿArabī studied Kitāb al-Taysīr of al-Dānī (d.444/1052) on al-qirāʾat, the interpretation of the Qurʾān, ḥadīth and fiqh according to the school of Mālik.⁵⁴
4. Abu'l-Qāsim b. Bashkwāl (d.578/1183), who taught Ibn ʿArabī ḥadīth, in Qurtuba.⁵⁵
5. Ibn Zarqūn, Muḥammad b. Saʿīd (d.586/1190). He was skilled in al-Tirmidhī's and Abū Dāwūd's collections of ḥadīth.⁵⁶
6. al-Ḥafīẓ Abū Bakr b. al-Jadd (d.586/257-58), a brilliant jurist and a ḥadīth-expert without a parallel in his time. Ibn ʿArabī heard ḥadīth from him in Spain.⁵⁷
7. Abu'l-Walīd al-Ḥaḍramī (d.587/1191), under whose direction Ibn ʿArabī studied ḥadīth, in Spain.⁵⁸
8. Abū Muḥammad b. ʿUbayd Allāh al-Ḥajarī (d.591/1194). He was skilled in ḥadīth and qirāʾat. Ibn ʿArabī studied under his direction in Sabta.⁵⁹
9. ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Khazrajī, called Ibn al-Faras (d.597/1200). He was skilled in ḥadīth and fiqh according to Mālik's school of jurisprudence. He taught Ibn ʿArabī in Seville.⁶⁰
10. ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ishbīlī (d.581/1185). An expert in both ḥadīth and fiqh. He visited Seville, where Ibn ʿArabī heard ḥadīth from him.⁶¹
11. Abu'l-Qāsim al-Ḥarastānī (d.614/1217), who was a chief judge in Damascus. Under his direction Ibn ʿArabī studied ḥadīth.⁶²
12. Abu'l-Ḥasan b. Abī Naṣr al-Bijāʿī (d.652/1254), a ḥadīth-expert who transmitted down al-Sahīḥ of Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj to Ibn ʿArabī in Shawwāl 606/1210.⁶³
13. al-Ḥafīẓ Abū Ṭāhir al-Salafī (d.578/1182).⁶⁴
14. Abu'l-Faraj b. al-Jawzī (d.597/1201).⁶⁵
15. Ibn ʿAsākir (d.571/1176).⁶⁶

Each of the last three scholars is reported to have given Ibn ʿArabī an ijāza to narrate ḥadīth on his authority.

2.1.7. Ṣūfī Masters

Although Ibn ʿArabī claims that his mystical knowledge was revealed to him directly from God, his biographical work Ṣūfīs of Andalusia contains information that he accompanied and served some Ṣūfī Masters, who must have had some sort of influence on him. The most important among these are: 1. Abū Jaʿfar or Abu'l-ʿAbbās al-ʿUraybī.⁶⁷ 2. Abū Yaʿqūb al-Kūmī, a disciple of Abū Madyan (d.594/1197).⁶⁸ 3. Ṣāliḥ al-ʿAdawī al-Barbarī.⁶⁹ 4. Abu'l-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Shubarbūlī.⁷⁰ 5. Fāṭima bint al-Muthannā.⁷¹ 6. Shams, mother of the poor.⁷² 7. Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Sharafī, who was alleged to be skilled in divining the future.⁷³ 8. Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Mujāhid (d.574/1178).⁷⁴ 9. Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Qassūm (d.606/1209); under his direction Ibn ʿArabī also studied fiqh.⁷⁵ 10. ʿAbd Allāh al-Mawrūrī.⁷⁶ 11. Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Rundī.⁷⁷ 12. Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Qanawī. Ibn ʿArabī accompanied him "for nearly ten years".⁷⁸ 13. ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Jāmiʿ.⁷⁹

Ibn ʿArabī often refers to Abū Madyan as his master. However, they never met in reality.⁸⁰

2.1.8. Works

Ibn ʿArabī is certainly "Ṣūfism's greatest systematizer"⁸¹: his works bear witness to this claim. He wrote not only on Ṣūfism, but also on ḥadīth, tafsīr (the interpretation of the Qur'ān) and other branches of knowledge. The number of his works is not yet agreed upon. There are three conflicting versions of a list of these works, given by Ibn ʿArabī himself, but that was some time before his death. The longest of these three mentions 289 works.⁸² Brockelmann lists 239.⁸³ Osman Yahya lists 846.⁸⁴ However, in both Brockelmann's and Yahya's lists some works are repeated under different titles. Among these works the most famous in both the Muslim and the non-Muslim world are: 1. al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya. 2. Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam. 3. Tarjumān al-Ashwāq. All three have already been referred to.

2.1.9. Students

Among Ibn ʿArabī's students the most important are:

1. Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d.672/1274).⁸⁵
2. Ismāʿīl b. Sawdakīn (d.646/1248).⁸⁶
3. al-Malik al-Muzaffar Ghāzī, ruler of Mayyafariqin (d.642/1244).⁸⁷
4. Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Khuwayy (d.637/1239), who was the chief judge of the school of al-Shāfiʿī in Syria. It is said that al-Khuwayy used to serve Ibn ʿArabī like a slave.⁸⁸
5. Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Ḥamawī (d.650/1252).⁸⁹
6. ʿAbd Allāh Badr al-Ḥabashī (d.618/1221). Ibn ʿArabī says about him, "He was my companion for twenty-three years and died while I was with him at Malatya."⁹⁰

2.1.10. Opinions of Muslim scholars on Ibn ʿArabī

In brief, it can be said that Muslim scholars fell into three categories with regard to their opinions on Ibn ʿArabī and his teachings: 1. Those who criticised him severely and considered him a non-believer (kāfir). 2. Those who esteemed him and considered him the Pole (qutb) of his time. 3. Those who neither esteemed nor criticised him, fearing that the true inwardness of his teachings might be beyond their understanding. Among these was al-Nawawī.

A record of these opinions is given by Ibn al-ʿImād.⁹¹

2.2. Sources of ḥadīth used by Ibn ʿArabī

The righteous (al-ṣāliḥīn) have always been accused of falsely attributing traditions to the prophet. in Muslim circles scholars as early as Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd al-Qaṭṭān (d.198/813) made this accusation. Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd is reported to have said, "Lan nara al-ṣāliḥīn fī shay'in akdhaba minhum fi'l-ḥadīth." i.e. we will never see the "pious" lie more wholeheartedly than in the transmission of traditions."⁹² The western opinion on the traditions used by the Ṣūfīs is summarised by Julian Baldick, a contemporary scholar, as follows:

"Earlier scholars decided that traditions of a mystical nature, notably those in which God speaks in the first person, were all ninth-century forgeries, invented by the Ṣūfīs for their own purposes. This standpoint was consistent with such scholars' overall view of the beginnings of Islam, one typical of attempts to write religious history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the founder was an austere prophet of God's absolute transcendence, whose pure faith was later corrupted by alien visionaries. Islam was therefore seen as an originally harsh and cold intrusion, which was later given mildness and warmth by Ṣūfism, a product of foreign borrowings and man's need for solace.

In recent years, however, it has been shown that the traditions used by Ṣūfīs, and notably those of the 'sacrosanct traditions' (ḥadīth qudsī) type, which present God's own speech, are not likely to be any later in origin than the others in the ninth-century collections."⁹³

Speaking about fabrication in ḥadīth Ibn ^ʿArabī says:

"Satan led a group of Muslims astray by dictating to them a genuine tradition which is beyond any doubt. In this tradition the prophet says, 'He who institutes a fair sunna ('trodden path') in Islam, so that it is practised after his death, to him a reward shall be given equal to that of all who have practised it.' Satan departed from these Muslims after making them penetrated with a desire for making the most of this tradition. In the endeavour to institute a fair sunna, and to gain a reward equal to that of all who have practised it, these Muslims falsely attributed some traditions to the prophet. Whenever a Muslim of this group instituted a fair sunna, he fabricated a tradition to support it. This was because he feared that if he attributed this fair sunna to himself it might not be accepted. He mistakenly thought that this (the fabrication of a tradition to support a fair sunna) fell under the above mentioned tradition. Accordingly, he approved of falsely attributing to the prophet traditions which the latter had never said, thinking that he was doing well. If the angel were to remind this Muslim that the prophet said, 'He who deliberately puts lies into my mouth, will have to occupy a seat in Hell', and that he (the prophet) also said, 'Verily, lying about me is not like lying about anyone else; he who deliberately puts lies into my mouth will have to occupy a seat in Hell', this Muslim would say, 'This is not the case, one would have to occupy a seat in Hell, if he puts lies into the prophet's mouth in order to lead others into error (dalāla). And I have put lies into the prophet's mouth to institute a fair sunna. He would say this because Satan had led him astray. On the one hand it is certain that this Muslim deserves to be rewarded for the fair sunna that he had instituted. On the other hand he deserves to be punished for putting lies into the prophet's mouth, and for making him say words that he did not say.'"⁹⁴

However, Ibn al-^ʿArabī himself has been accused by western and Muslim

scholars alike of using fabricated traditions in his works.

There is a great number of ḥadīth in Ibn ʿArabī's works Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya and Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam. It is worthy of note that not all of these traditions have been interpreted in a special way by Ibn ʿArabī. The majority of them, however, have been used and interpreted in a significant manner. These are the traditions on which Ibn ʿArabī bases his doctrinal teaching. In other words, they are the traditions which Ibn ʿArabī uses to justify his way of thinking.

My aim in this section is to trace these traditions to their original sources. In other words, to find out whether these traditions are in the authentic collections of traditions (kutub al-ṣiḥāḥ) or not. If not, I will find out if these traditions have been disputed. And I will present the opinions of the ḥadīth scholars on the isnāds of these traditions to the reader. When tracing these traditions back to their first sources I will arrange them into two categories: First, traditions which are in the five canonical collections (al-kutub al-khamsa). Secondly, traditions which are in works other than the five canonical collections.⁹⁵

2.2.1. Traditions in the five canonical collections⁹⁶

1. "God created Adam in his form." ⁹⁷ (Bukhārī & Muslim)
2. "God was and nothing was with him." (Then into this saying was incorporated the sentence "...and he is now as he was")⁹⁸. (Bukhārī, with a very slight difference in the wording.)
3. "God descends each night to the nearest heaven."⁹⁹ (Bukhārī)
4. The prophet is reported to have said that God said, "Whoever treats a Friend of mine as an enemy, on him I declare war. My servant continues drawing nearer to me through supererogatory acts until I love him, and when I love him, I become his ear with which he hears, his eye with which he sees, his hand with which he grasps and his foot with which he walks. And if he asks me (for something), I give it to him. If indeed he seeks my help, I help him. I have never hesitated to do anything as I hesitate (to take) the soul of the man of faith who hates death, for I

hate to harm him."¹⁰⁰ (Bukhārī)

The version which Ibn ʿArabī refers to is identical with this one, but he adds at the end of this tradition the sentence, "and he must meet me." This addition is not found in the canonical collections.

5. The prophet is reported to have said, "My Lord -inaccessible and majestic is he-came to me at night in the most beautiful form. He said, 'O Muḥammad!' I said, 'Here I am, my Lord, at thy service.' He said, 'What is the higher plenum disputing about?' I said, 'I know not, my Lord.' He said that two or three times. Then he placed his palm between my shoulders. I felt its coolness between my breasts, and every thing in the heavens and earth was disclosed to me...Then he said, 'O Muḥammad! What is the higher plenum disputing about?' I said, 'About expiations (kaffārāt).' He said, 'And what are expiations?' I said, 'Going on foot to congregations (jamāʿāt), sitting in the mosque after the prayers, and performing the ablutions fully in difficult circumstances. He who does that lives in good and dies in good. His offences are like the day his mother bore him."¹⁰¹ (Tirmidhī)

6. "(The division) of time has turned to its original form which was current when God created the world." ¹⁰² (Bukhārī & Muslim)

7. "Three things have been made beloved to me in this world of yours: women, perfume and my solace was made to be in prayer."¹⁰³ (al-Nasāʾi)

8. "His veil is light. Were he to withdraw its curtain, then would the glories of his face consume everyone who apprehended him with his sight."¹⁰⁴ (Muslim)

9. "God will gather the people together on the day of resurrection and then he will say, 'He who used to worship something, let him follow it.' Thereupon, he who used to serve and worship the sun will follow the sun; he who used to serve and worship the moon will follow the moon; and he who used to serve and worship the idols will follow the idols. In this community there will still be hypocrites. God will come to them in a form other than his form that they know. Then he will say, 'I am your Lord.' Then they will say, 'We take refuge in God from thee! This is our place until our Lord comes to us! If our Lord were to come, we would know

him.' So God will come to them in his form that they know. Then he will say, 'I am your Lord.' Thereupon they will follow him, and he will set up the bridge between the two halves of Hell. Then I and my community shall be the first to cross over...."¹⁰⁵ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

10. "He (God) is light. How can I see him?"¹⁰⁶ (Muslim)

11. "If God were to manifest himself to a certain object of his creation it would surely be submissive to him."¹⁰⁷ (al-Nasā'ī)

12. "God will say on the day of resurrection, 'O son of Adam, I was sick and you did not visit me.' He will say, 'O my Lord, how could I visit you, when you are the Lord of all beings?' He will say, 'Did you not know that my servant so - and - so was sick, and you did not visit him? Did you not know that if you had visited him, you would have found me with him? - O son of Adam I sought food from you, and you did not feed me.' He (man) will say, 'O my Lord, how could I feed you, when you are the Lord of all beings?' He will say, 'Did you not know that my servant so - and -so sought food from you, and you did not feed him? Did you not know that if you had fed him, you would have found that to have been for me? - O son of Adam, I asked you for drink, and you did not give me to drink.' He will say, 'O my Lord, how could I give you to drink, when you are the Lord of all beings?' He will say, 'My servant so - and - so asked you for a drink, and you did not give him to drink. (Did you not know) that if you had given him to drink, you would have found that to have been for me?'"¹⁰⁸ (Muslim)

This tradition and others of the same nature, are used by western scholars to support the idea that the spiritual side of Islam is of a Christian origin. For example Graham says, "This entire saying of God parallels closely the well-known passage of Matthew 25: 41-45, and thus may conceivably represent a text that Muslims were ready to accept as a pre-Qur'ānic revelation that Muḥammad quoted for the benefit of his community."¹⁰⁹ Julian Baldick says, "Some of the 'sacrosanct traditions' are recognisably reflections of Christian source materials: God speaks of men who love one another in him, as in New Testament usage. He says, 'I was

sick and you did not visit me', etc. (cf. Matthew 25:41-5); also , 'I have prepared for my pious servants what no eye has seen, and no ear has heard, and has not occurred to the heart of any man.' This saying is found in almost identical wording in the Coptic Gospel of Thomas."¹¹⁰

13. "God said, 'I have divided the (ritual) prayer in two halves between me and my servant and my servant shall have what he asks.' When the servant says, 'Praise be to God, Lord of all beings', God says, 'My servant praises me.' And when he says, 'The merciful, the compassionate', God says, 'My servant extols me', And when he says, 'Master of the Day of Judgement', He says, 'My servant glorifies me' (in one version 'My servant gives full power to me'). And when he says, 'Thee do we serve, and thee do we ask for help', He says, 'This is between me and my servant, and my servant shall have what he asks'. And when he says, 'Lead us on the straight path, the path of those whom thou hast guided, not of those against whom thou art angry, nor of those who are astray', He says, 'This belongs to my servant, and my servant shall have what he asks'."¹¹¹ (Muslim)

14. "If you were to let down a rope it would fall upon God."¹¹² (Tirmidhī)

15. "God says: 'Majesty is my cloak, and grandeur my girdle. Whoever contends with me in either one of these, him I shall cast into Hellfire.'"¹¹³ (Muslim)

This ḥadīth is reported in almost all the standard collections of ḥadīth. However, there are slight differences in the wording. Some times the term Jahannam replaces al-nār (Hellfire), and ʿizzā (glory) replaces ʿazama (grandeur). In Muslim's Ṣaḥīḥ part of the ḥadīth is in the third person, part in the first person: al-ʿizzā izāruhu wa-l-kibriyā' ridā'uhu fa-man yunāziʿunī ʿadhdhabtuḥu, "Glory is his girdle, and majesty his cloak; whoever contends with me, him shall I punish."¹¹⁴

16. "God created Adam and then touched his loins with his right hand and brought forth from them (his) progeny. Thereupon he said, 'I have created these for Paradise, and they shall act in the manner of the people of Paradise.' Then he touched his loins and brought forth from them (other) progeny. He said, 'I have

created these for Fire, and they shall act in the manner of the people of Fire."¹¹⁵ (Tirmidhī)

17. "Whoever sees me in sleep has indeed seen me, for the Devil cannot take my form upon himself." This ḥadīth is also reported as follows: "Whoever sees me has indeed seen the truth (man ra'ānī fa-qad ra'ā al-ḥaqq)."¹¹⁶ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

18. "When anyone of you stands for the ritual worship he is speaking in private to his Lord, his Lord is between him and his qibla."¹¹⁷ (Bukhārī)

19. "The learned are the heirs of the prophets."¹¹⁸ (Bukhārī)

20. "A servant commits a sin, then says, 'O God! Forgive me my sin!' Then God says, 'My servant has committed a sin. He knows that he has a Lord who forgives sin and takes it (from him).'119 (Muslim)

21. Anas reported that God's messenger happened to pass by the people who had been busy in grafting the (palm) trees. Thereupon he said, 'If you had let the trees be, they would have been good.' (So they abandoned this practice) and there was a decline in the yield. He (the prophet) happened to pass by them and said, 'What has gone wrong with your (palm) trees?' They said, 'You said so and so.' Thereupon he said, 'You are more knowledgeable (than I) in the best interests of this world of yours.'¹²⁰ (Muslim)

22. "I fulfil my servant's expectations of me, and I am with him when he remembers me. If he remembers me in his heart, I remember him in my heart, and if he remembers me in public, I remember him before (far) better than that. And if he draws near to me by an arm's length, I draw near to him by a fathom, and if he comes to me walking, I come to him running."¹²¹ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

23. "Mu^cāwiya b. al-Hakam al-Sulamī reported, 'I said, O messenger of

God...among us there are men who draw lines and thus make divination. What about this? Thereupon he (the prophet) said, 'There was a prophet who drew lines, so for anyone whose lines agree with his, it is allowable.'"¹²² (Muslim)

24. "Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī narrated, 'While we were on one of our journeys, we dismounted at a place where a slave girl came and said, 'The chief of this tribe has been stung by a scorpion and our men are not present; is there any body among you who can treat him (by reciting something)? Then one of our men went along with her, though we did not think that he knew any such treatment. But he treated the chief by reciting something, and the sick man recovered, whereupon he gave him thirty sheep and gave us milk to drink (as a reward). When he returned we asked our friend, 'Did you know how to treat with the recitation of something? He said, 'No, but I treated him only with the recitation of the mother of the book (i.e., the first chapter of the Qur'ān). We said, 'Do not do any thing (about it) till we reach or ask the prophet. So when we reached Medina, we mentioned that to the prophet (in order to know whether the sheep which we had taken were lawful to take or not). The prophet said, 'How did he come to know that it (the first chapter of the Qur'ān) could be used for treatment? Distribute your reward and assign for me one share thereof as well.'"¹²³ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

25. "Abū Hurayra reported that the prophet said, 'When a man commits adultery, imān (faith in God) departs from him and becomes like a cloud (zulla) over him. When he stops committing adultery imān returns to him.'"¹²⁴ (Abū Dāwūd)

26. "Abū Hurayra reported from the prophet, 'The vision of a righteous man (al-rajul al-sālih) is one of forty-six parts of prophecy.'"¹²⁵ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

27. "Among the nations before you there were people who could divine the unknown. If there were to be a person such as these in the Muslim nation, it would be ʿUmar."¹²⁶ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

28. "Jābir reported that the prophet said, 'My relationship to the prophets is like that of the single brick to the house in the story of the man who built a house, completed it and made it perfect but for the space of a single brick. People entered

therein and they were surprised at it and said, 'Had there been a single brick (the structure would have been complete in all respects). The messenger of God said, 'I am the one who filled that space, I came and finalised the prophets.'"¹²⁷ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

29. "The messenger of God would expose himself to the rain, uncovering his head to it saying, 'It (the rain) has come fresh from its Lord.'"¹²⁸ (Abū Dāwūd)

30. "The most truthful utterance by a poet is that of Labīd: 'Everything but God is untrue (bātil).'"¹²⁹ (Bukhārī)

The verse which is referred to in this tradition is one of the verses of a muḥallaqa (suspended poem), which is attributed to an ancient Arab poet, Labīd.¹³⁰

31. "Your love for a certain thing causes you to be blind and deaf (to all other things)."¹³¹ (Abū Dāwūd)

32. "The prophet said, 'My intercession (shafaʿati) is for the members of my community who commit grave offences (kabā'ir).'"¹³² (Abū Dāwūd)

33. "The prophet returned (from Ḥirā') with the inspiration (wahy) and with his heart beating severely. Then he went to Khadija bint Khuwaylid and said, 'Cover me, cover me!'"¹³³ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

34. Abū Hurayra is reported to have said, "I have committed to memory two types of knowledge which I learned from the prophet. I have propagated one of them to you and if I propagate the second, my head would be cut off."¹³⁴ (Bukhārī)

35. "He (the last man to enter Paradise) will keep on invoking God till God smiles, and when God smiles because of him, he will enter Paradise."¹³⁵ (Bukhārī)

36. The prophet was asked, "Where was God before he created the creatures?" He replied, "He was in a cloud, neither above which nor below which was any air."¹³⁶ (Tirmidhī)

37. "Whoever hears the adhān (the call to prayer), whether a human being, a jinnī or any other creature, will be a witness for the one who performs the adhān on the day of Resurrection."¹³⁷ (Bukhārī)

38. ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have said, "One day while we were sitting with the messenger of Allāh (may the blessings and peace of Allāh be upon him) there appeared before us a man whose clothes were exceedingly white and whose hair was exceedingly black; no signs of journeying were to be seen on him and none of us knew him. He walked up and sat down by the prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allāh be upon him). Resting his knees against his and placing the palms of his hands on his thighs, he said, 'O Muḥammad, tell me about Islam.' The messenger of Allāh said, 'Islam is to testify that there is no God but Allāh and Muḥammad is the messenger of Allāh, to perform the ritual prayers, to pay alms-tax (zakāt), to fast in Ramaḍān, and to make the pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine in Mecca if you are able to do so. He said, 'You have spoken rightly', and we were amazed at him asking him and saying that he had spoken rightly. He said, 'Then tell me about imān.' The messenger of Allāh said, 'It is to believe in Allāh, his angels, his books, his messengers, and the Last Day and to believe in divine destiny, both the good and the evil thereof.' He said, 'You have spoken rightly. Then tell me about iḥsān.' The messenger of Allāh said, 'It is to worship Allāh as if you see him, and while you see him not yet truly he sees you.'" At the end of this tradition it is said that the prophet informed his companions that the man who was questioning him was Gabriel.¹³⁸ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

39. It is reported on the authority of Abū Hurayra that he heard the prophet saying, "I was given the all-comprehensive words (jawāmiʿ al-kalim); I was helped with terror (being put in the hearts of the enemies); and while I was asleep last night I saw myself being brought the keys of the treasures of the earth which were placed in my hand."¹³⁹ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

40. Abū Hurayra reported God's messenger as saying, "I will be the master of mankind on the Day of Resurrection, the first whose grave will be cleft open, the first intercessor and the first whose intercession will be accepted."¹⁴⁰ (Muslim & al-Bukhārī with a different version.)

Abū Dāwūd reports the same tradition with a slightly different version in

which the prophet is reported to have said, "I am the master of mankind, the first whose grave will be cleft open, the first intercessor and the first whose intercession will be accepted."¹⁴¹

41. Abū Saʿīd reported God's messenger as saying, "I will be the master of mankind on the Day of Resurrection, and this is no boast; and in my hand will be the banner of praise (liwā' al-ḥamd), and this is no boast. There will be no prophet, Adam or any other, who will not be under my banner. I will be the first whose grave will be cleft open, and this is no boast."¹⁴² (Tirmidhī)

2.2.2. Traditions in works other than the five canonical collections

1. Jābir is reported to have said, "ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb brought the prophet a copy of the Torah and said, 'O messenger of Allāh, this is a copy of the Torah.' The prophet kept silent. ʿUmar started reciting (from that copy), and the prophet's face kept changing (i.e. looking angry). Then Abū Bakr said to ʿUmar, 'May (your) women folk mourn your death. Do not you see the anger in the prophet's face?' ʿUmar then looked at the prophet's face and said, 'I seek refuge with Allāh from Allāh's anger and from the anger of his messenger. We accept Allāh as our Lord, Islam as our religion and Muḥammad as our prophet.' Then the prophet said, 'By him in whose hand my soul is, were Moses to appear before you now, and were you to follow him and leave me, you would be misled. And were he (Moses) alive at the time when I have been sent as a prophet, he would certainly follow me.' (al-Dārimī)

Ibn ʿArabī reports this tradition with a very minor variation in wording. Chittick has mistakenly stated that this tradition is not found in A. J. Wensinck's standard concordance of the canonical collections of ḥadīth.¹⁴³

2. "I feel the breath of your Lord (the breath of the Merciful) from the direction of Yemen."¹⁴⁴ (Ibn Ḥanbal)

The transmitters of this tradition are claimed to be reliable (thiqāt).¹⁴⁵

3. "Whoever devotes himself solely to God for forty days, fountains of wisdom shall pour forth from his heart upon his tongue." According to Nawawī this is not a saying of the prophet, but it is a saying of Makhūl (d. some time between 112/730 and 118/736) who is one of the ṭabiʿīn (the generation after the prophet's companions).¹⁴⁶
4. "I was an unknown treasure, and loved to be known, so I created the creatures, and made myself known to them. So, by me they knew me (kuntu kanzan makhfiyyan lam uʿraf fa-aḥbabtu an uʿraf fa-khalaqtu al-khalq wa-taʿarraftu ilayhim fa-bī ʿarafūnī)."¹⁴⁷ In his commentary on this tradition Muḥammad b. Khalīl al-Ṭarābulṣī, known as al-Qāwuqjī, a Hanbalī scholar (d.1305/1887) says, "Ibn Taymiyya said that this tradition is not traceable to the prophet, and it has no isnād, whether a genuine (ṣaḥīḥ) or a weak one (daʿīf). Al-Zarkashī and Ibn Ḥajar agreed with Ibn Taymiyya on this opinion. But the meaning of this tradition is correct and clear, and it is well known in Ṣūfī circles."¹⁴⁸ Ibn ʿArabī was well aware that the authenticity of this tradition cannot be proved through the established technique of ḥadīth criticism. Nevertheless, he believes that its authenticity is established through "unveiling" (kashf). He says in this connection, "(This ḥadīth) is sound on the basis of unveiling, but not established by way of transmission (naql)."¹⁴⁹
5. "My Lord, increase my bewilderment in thee."¹⁵⁰ Though Ibn ʿArabī often quotes this tradition, it is not found in the standard collections. "al-Ghazālī among others considers it a ḥadīth." But according to the Ṣūfī writer Abū Ibrāhīm al-Bukhārī, called al-Mustamlī (d.434/945) this is not a tradition of the prophet, but an utterance of Abū Yazīd of Baṣām, the famous mystic (d.c.261/875).¹⁵¹
6. The prophet is reported to have said that God said, "Heaven and earth contain me not, but the heart of my faithful servant contains me."¹⁵² According to the famous traditionist Zayn al-Dīn al-ʿIrāqī (d.806/1403) this tradition "has no origin", i.e. it is false. But at the same time ʿIrāqī refers to a tradition in the Muʿjam of al-Ṭabarānī (d.360/971). The meaning of this tradition matches that of

the former, and reads as follows: "It is reported on the authority of Abū ʿUtba al-Khulānī that the prophet said, 'Verily, there are receptacles (āniya) for your Lord from among the people of earth. the receptacles of your Lord are the hearts of his righteous servants (āniyat rabbikum qulūb ʿibādihi al-ṣāliḥīn).'" ʿIrāqī says that in the isnād of this tradition there is Buqya b. al-Walīd (d.197/812), who is known as a mudallis (a person who commits deceit (tadlis) in the transmission of ḥadīth). However, ʿIrāqī says that Buqya committed no deceit in giving the isnād of this tradition in particular. In other words this tradition is free from tadlis, i.e. it is acceptable.¹⁵³

7. "It was said to the prophet Muḥammad that Jesus was said to have walked on water. The prophet Muḥammad then said, 'If he (Jesus) had more certainty (law izdāda yaqīnan) he could have walked in the air (la mashā ʿala'l-hawā').'"¹⁵⁴ ʿIrāqī says that this tradition is detestable (munkar) and not recognised (lā yuʿraf) in this form. ʿIrāqī adds that the generally recognised tradition in this connection is the one in Kitāb al-Yaqīn of Ibn Abi'l-Dunyā (208-281/823-894). This tradition reads as follows: "The apostles of Jesus Christ (al-Hawāriyyūn) missed him, and then they were told that he went in the direction of the sea. So, they went searching for him. When they reached the sea, they saw him drawing near to them walking on the water...and he (Jesus) said, 'If the son of Adam had certainty (yaqīn) by a hair's breadth, he could have walked on water.'" ʿIrāqī also refers to a second tradition in this connection. This tradition is reported on the authority of Muʿadh b. Jabal, but its isnād is weak (daʿīf), and it can be read as follows: "If you knew God for certain, you would walk on the seas, and mountains would vanish when you call down curses upon them."¹⁵⁵

8. "All men are asleep and when they die they shall awake."¹⁵⁶ This tradition is attributed in some works to the prophet, while in others it is attributed to ʿAlī b. Abī Tālib. For example Abū Ishāq b. ʿAlī al-Ḥuṣārī (d.453/1061) in his work Zahr al-Ādāb attributes this tradition to the prophet, while al-Kalabādhī (d.380/990) attributes the same tradition to ʿAlī. Commenting on this matter, ʿIrāqī, being an

expert of the criticism of ḥadīth, says that he has not found this tradition with an isnād that goes back to the prophet. He adds that on the contrary it is traced back to ^cAlī b. Abī Ṭālib.¹⁵⁷

9. "God is concealed to the intellects just as he is to the eyes."¹⁵⁸

10. "Four angels met at the Holy Shrine in Mecca (al-Kaʿba). Every one of them asked the other where he came from. They all said from God."¹⁵⁹

11. "God is in heaven just as he is on earth. Verily, the angels search for him as you do."¹⁶⁰

12. "He who knows himself knows his Lord."¹⁶¹ Ibn Taymiyya states that this tradition is fabricated (mawḍūʿ).¹⁶² But the same tradition is attributed to ^cAlī b. Abī Ṭālib in Nahj al-Balagha.¹⁶³

13. "There is a time when no one but my Lord is possible for the position which I am in."¹⁶⁴ In his comment on this tradition, al-Qāwuqjī, author of al-Lu'lu' al-Marsūʿ says, "This tradition is well known in Ṣūfī circles. I have not found a scholar who has indicated that it is fabricated. The meaning of this tradition is correct. It refers to the station of being absorbed in union with God (maqām al-istighrāq bi'l-liqā'), which has been designated with the terms maḥw (effacement) and fanā' (passing away)."¹⁶⁵ The same tradition is reported with a little difference in the text in Aḥādīth-i Mathnawī¹⁶⁶, and it can be read as follows: "I have a time with God when there is no room for any archangel (malak muqarrab) or messenger of God."¹⁶⁷

14. "The Qur'ān has literal and hidden meanings."¹⁶⁸ This tradition is considered sound (ṣaḥīḥ) as it is reported by Ibn Ḥibbān (d.354/965) in his Ṣaḥīḥ.¹⁶⁹ However, it is not in the five canonical collections. Ibn ^cArabi was aware of this. So, he states that there is agreement among his Ṣūfī fellows who experienced unveiling (ahl al-kashf) that this tradition is authentic.¹⁷⁰ In another version of this tradition, which is often quoted by Ibn ^cArabi, it is said, "There is no verse of the Qur'ān which does not have a literal meaning (ẓāhir), a hidden meaning (bāṭin), a limit (ḥadd) and a place to which one may ascend (muttalaʿ)." I could not trace

this version back to any of the well-known collections of ḥadīth.

15. "The ruler (al-sultān) is the shadow of God on earth."¹⁷¹ According to ^ʿIraqī the isnād of this tradition is weak.

16. "There is a knowledge that has the guise of the hidden (hay'at al-maknūn); none knows it but those who have knowledge of God. When they speak of it, none denies it but those who are deluded about God."¹⁷² ^ʿIraqī states that this tradition is reported by Abū ^ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d.412/1021) in his al-Arbaʿīn fi'l-Taṣawwuf, but he claims that the isnād is weak.¹⁷³

17. "The first thing that God created was the intellect."¹⁷⁴ Ibn Taymiyya and other scholars agreed that this tradition is fabricated, while ^ʿIraqī says that it has been reported through two different isnāds, both of which are weak.¹⁷⁵

18. "The prophet said, 'God has seventy (or seventy thousand) veils of light and darkness: were he to withdraw their curtain, then would the glories of his face consume everyone who apprehended him with his sight.'"¹⁷⁶ This tradition is reported in many reference works. But the number of veils differs from one reference to the other. For example the number of veils is seventy in one reference, seventy seven in a second one, a thousand in a third one and seventy thousand in a fourth one.¹⁷⁷ As the number of veils is not agreed upon, this tradition should be considered a mudṭarib (insufficiently supported one). And it is known that the mudṭarib is classified by ḥadīth experts in the category of weak traditions. Accordingly, the only tradition that one could accept as sound in this connection is the one reported by Muslim. This is tradition number 8 in the first part of this section. However, the fact that the number of veils is not agreed upon does not make a significant change in the meaning.

19. "He will be gathered in the state he was in at death."¹⁷⁸ So far, I could not trace this tradition.

20. "I was a prophet when Adam was still between the water and the clay."¹⁷⁹ First I should mention that R. W. J. Austin has mistakenly claimed that this tradition is reported in the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī.¹⁸⁰ Austin might have confused this

tradition with the one which says, "I was a prophet when Adam was still between the soul and the body." Sakhāwī, a ḥadīth expert (d.902/1497) is reported to have said that he was not informed of this tradition in this way. And that the only tradition that he knows in this connection is the one in which the prophet was asked, "When were you chosen to be a prophet?" The prophet replied, "When Adam was still between the soul and the body."¹⁸¹ However, it is important that I mention here a tradition in the Musnad of Ibn Ḥanbal, in which the prophet says, "I was inscribed in God's presence as a servant of God and the seal of the prophets when Adam was prone in his clay."¹⁸²

21. "Abū Bakr was not preferred to others for plentiful fasting or prayer, but for something that was established in his heart."¹⁸³ According to al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī this tradition does not go back to the prophet but to Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Madanī (d.162/778).¹⁸⁴

22. The prophet Muḥammad is reported to have said, "The learned of this community are equal to the prophets of the children of Israel."¹⁸⁵ Ibn Ḥajar (d.852/1449), al-Suyūṭī (d.911/1505) and many other ḥadīth-experts are reported to have said that this tradition has no origin (lā aṣl lahu), that is to say it is fabricated.¹⁸⁶

23. "The prophet Muḥammad said to Ḥāritha, 'What is the essence of your belief in God?' Ḥāritha answered, 'My soul has become averse to this world; so I am thirsty in the day-time, sleepless at night and it is as though I beheld the throne of my Lord coming forth.'¹⁸⁷

24. It is reported that God said to David regarding those who long for him, "O David, I long for them even more."¹⁸⁸ So far I could not trace this tradition back to any of the canonical or the well-known collections of ḥadīth. However, a similar tradition is quoted in the famous Ihyā' ʿUlūm al-Dīn of Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī (d.505/1111). In this tradition the prophet Muḥammad is reported to have said that God said, "Verily the longing of the righteous to see me has increased, and verily I long for them even more." Commenting on this tradition ʿIrāqī says, "It has no

origin", i.e. it is false.¹⁸⁹

25. Abū Dharr is reported to have said, "One day I saw the prophet sitting by himself. So I came and sat with him. Then Abū Bakr came, greeted the prophet and sat to his right side. Then ʿUmar came, greeted the prophet and sat on Abū Bakr's right. then ʿUthmān came, greeted the prophet and sat on ʿUmar's right. The prophet had seven (or nine) little stones in front of him then. He took these stones into his palm, and then they glorified God until I heard them humming like bees. The prophet put them down and they became silent. Then he took them and put them into the palm of Abū Bakr, and then they glorified God until I heard them humming like bees. Abū Bakr put them down and they became silent. Then the prophet put them into the palm of ʿUmar, and then they glorified God until I heard them humming like bees. ʿUmar put them down and they became silent. Then the prophet put them into the palm of ʿUthmān, and then they glorified God until I heard them humming like bees. ʿUthmān put them down and they became silent. The prophet said then, 'This is the caliphate of prophethood (hādhihi khilāfat al-nubuwwa).'"¹⁹⁰ This tradition is reported from Abū Dharr through two different isnāds. First, it is reported on the authority of Ṣāliḥ b. Abi'l-Akhḍar (d. between 140-150/757-767) from Abū Dharr. Secondly, it is reported on the authority of a man from the tribe of Banī Salīm from Abū Dharr. This man's name is not mentioned. Bayhaqī is reported to have said that Ṣāliḥ b. Abi'l-Akhḍar is not a ḥāfiẓ (an authority in the transmission of ḥadīth). Thus, he rejected the first isnād. But he acknowledged the same tradition with the second isnād. He is reported to have justified this opinion by claiming that the second isnād is held in safe keeping (mahfūẓ).¹⁹¹

The preceding shows that a considerable number of the traditions which are used by Ibn ʿArabī is found in the canonical and well-known collections of ḥadīth, but at the same time the number of the traditions which are not found in these collections, and are used by Ibn ʿArabī is not negligible. Not only are these traditions not found in the canonical and well-known collections, but some of them

are declared fabricated by some ḥadīth experts. Ibn ʿArabī, as will be demonstrated in the following section, was not ignorant of the fact that the authenticity of these traditions cannot be proved through the established methods of the criticism of ḥadīth. However, he is of the opinion that their authenticity is established by means of an extraordinary method, i.e. "unveiling".

2.3. The establishment of the authenticity of ḥadīth by means of "unveiling" (kashf)

Earlier I have referred to Ibn al-ʿArabī's statement concerning the tradition "I was an unknown treasure...". The tradition is considered a fabricated one by ḥadīth experts. To Ibn al-ʿArabī this tradition is authentic. Its authenticity is established by means of "unveiling". In the case of the tradition "The Qur'ān has literal...", though the tradition is considered sound by ḥadīth experts, Ibn al-ʿArabī also states that the authenticity of the tradition is confirmed by means of "unveiling". Accordingly, in Ibn al-ʿArabī's doctrine "unveiling" serves as a method by means of which the authenticity of the traditions can be investigated, no matter whether the tradition to be investigated has been accepted by ḥadīth experts or not. This is also understood from many statements in the Futūḥāt. The following are examples of this. Speaking about the state of "the prophets among the Friends" Ibn ʿArabī says:

"The prophets among the Friends in this community are those individuals whom God places within one of his self-disclosures. Then He makes the loci of manifestation of Muḥammad and Gabriel stand before him. Then the spiritual locus of manifestation (Gabriel) allows him to hear as he addresses Muḥammad's locus of manifestation with the rulings of the law. Once the addressing is finished and the heart of the Friend who possesses this locus of witnessing is delivered from fright, he perceives through his rational faculty all the rulings of the law comprised in that address and appearing within the Muḥammadan community. This Friend takes those rulings just as the Muḥammadan locus of manifestation took them...Then the Friend is returned to himself, and he has retained in his memory everything by which the Spirit has addressed the locus of manifestation of Muḥammad. He has come to know the soundness of that address through

the knowledge of certainty (ʿayn al-yaqīn). He takes the ruling of the prophet, and he puts it into practice 'upon a clear sign from his Lord'.

There is many a weak ḥadīth which is not put into practice because of the weakness of its line of transmission -because a certain forger (wāḍiʿ) transmitted it- yet which is sound in fact, since in this particular case the forger told the truth and did not forge it. The scholar of ḥadīth (muḥaddith) rejects it only because he cannot rely on that person's transmission. But that is only when this forger is the only person to transmit it, or the ḥadīth goes back only to him. But if a reliable transmitter shares in having heard the ḥadīth, then the ḥadīth will be accepted by way of the reliable transmitter. But this Friend may have heard the Spirit casting this very ḥadīth upon the reality of Muḥammad, just as the companions heard along with Muḥammad in the ḥadīth of Gabriel concerning submission, faith, and virtue, when Gabriel confirmed the truth of what the prophet said. When the Friend hears it from the Spirit who casts it, he is like the companion who heard it from the mouth of God's Messenger, since he gains a knowledge about which he does not doubt. He is different from the follower -who accepts it only on the basis of the 'predominance of surmise'- since there is no suspicion which might impair its truthfulness.

There is also many a ḥadīth which is sound by way of its transmitters and which has been learned by this possessor of unveiling who sees this locus of manifestation. Then he asks the prophet about this sound ḥadīth, and he denies it and says, 'I did not say it or judge by it'. Thereby the Friend comes to know of its weakness, so he ceases putting it into practice 'upon a clear sign from his Lord,' even if the people of transmission put it into practice because of the soundness of its line, though in fact it is not sound. The like of this has been mentioned by Muslim at the beginning of his book, the Ṣaḥīḥ. This possessor of unveiling may even come to know who forged this ḥadīth, the line of transmission of which is supposed to be sound. Either the name of the forger would have been mentioned to him, or the form of the person would have been set up before him.

These are the prophets among the Friends. In no way have they their own law, nor are they addressed with a law. They are given only knowledge (taʿrīf) that this is the law of Muḥammad, or they witness the Spirit descending upon him with a ruling in the Presence of Imaginalization, which is both outside and inside their own essence. In the case of the dreamer this is called 'heralding visions'. But the Friend shares with the prophet in that he perceives during wakefulness what the common people perceive during sleep."¹⁹²

Speaking about the mubashshirāt ("heralding visions") Ibn ʿArabī says:

"They (the mubashshirāt) are one of the parts of prophecy. The 'heralding vision' is revealed to the Muslim either directly from God, or through one of God's servants. That is to say; the Muslim either sees it for himself or someone else sees it for him. So, if he sees a 'heralding vision' in which he

sees the prophet giving him a certain command, it is obligatory that he acts in accordance with it. However, it is a condition that he sees the prophet as he is described in the authentic reports. This condition is so important to the extent that when he sees the prophet he should see him with a broken middle incisor in the upper jaw. If this is not so the condition is not fulfilled. If he sees a 'heralding vision' in which he sees the prophet -old or young- but he sees him in a different image (from the one described in the authentic reports); for example he sees him more handsome or uglier, or he sees himself behaving badly towards the prophet, this vision stands for the truth (al-ḥaqq) with which the prophet came, and not the prophet himself. In other words the 'heralding vision' which this Muslim has seen stands for the state of sharʿ (Islamic law) in the place where he has seen the vision, the state of this Muslim with regard to the sharʿ, or for both of them...So, if he sees the prophet in this different image giving him a certain command, that requires the abolition of another command which is established by authentic reports, he should not act in accordance with it. This is not the case when he sees the prophet as he is described in the authentic reports, because then he is obliged to follow the prophet's command. However, the other Muslims are not obliged to follow this command. The 'heralding vision' in which the prophet is seen as he is described in the authentic reports is the proof (al-furqān) by which the people of God (ahl Allāh) establish the authenticity of ḥadīth. They (the people of God) might also see the prophet through unveiling. Then he confirms to them the authenticity of certain traditions which are considered weak by way of transmission. In the same manner they might reject some traditions which are established by way of transmission. An example of this is the report by Muslim, at the beginning of his book, about a man who saw the prophet in a 'heralding vision'. The man asked the prophet about the authenticity of a thousand traditions which the former had committed to memory. The prophet confirmed only six traditions from among the thousand, and rejected all the others. So, whoever sees the prophet in sleeping has seen him in waking...because Satan cannot take the prophet's form upon himself."¹⁹³

Ibn ʿArabi's opinion that the authenticity of a ḥadīth can be established by confirmation of its authenticity by the prophet Muḥammad through a "heralding vision" deserves to be discussed in more details. He built this opinion on the tradition in which the prophet is reported to have said, "Whoever sees me in sleep has indeed seen me, for the Devil cannot take my form upon himself."¹⁹⁴ Another version of this tradition is: "whoever sees me has indeed seen the truth."¹⁹⁵ The first being a translation of the Arabic text: "Man ra'ānī fi'l-manām fa qad ra'ānī fa inna al-shayṭān lā yatamaththalu bī." The second being a translation of the Arabic

text: "Man ra'ānī fa qad ra'ā al-ḥaqq." The word al-ḥaqq is also one of the names of Allāh. So, the tradition is sometimes translated: "Whoever sees me has seen God."¹⁹⁶ The two versions of the tradition have already been traced back to the authentic collections. They are both found in both al-Bukhārī's and Muslim's Ṣaḥīḥs. The meaning of the tradition is quite implicit. Whenever a Muslim sees the prophet Muḥammad, whether in sleep or in waking, he should believe that it is real and truthful. Therefore, he should take what the prophet tells him during this vision for granted. Not only this but he should also act in accordance with it, as it is one of the basics of Islam to do so. This is confirmed in many Qur'ānic verses. Examples of this are: "Nor speaks he out of caprice. This is naught but a revelation revealed",¹⁹⁷ "Obey Allāh and the messenger",¹⁹⁸ and "Say: If you love God follow me and God will love you."¹⁹⁹

This consideration leads us to a question: Should other Muslims accept the claim that a certain tradition's authenticity has been established by the prophet through "unveiling" or through a "heralding vision"? And should they accordingly put this tradition into practice? There is similarity between this case and khābar al-wāḥid. Khābar al-wāḥid is a tradition "resting on the authority of only one companion." This type of ḥadīth is considered genuine (ṣaḥīḥ) by ḥadīth experts. The majority of them are of the opinion that it constitutes a decisive argument, and that it is as good as the mutawātir²⁰⁰ ("a tradition transmitted via so many different channels that forgery is supposedly out of the question").²⁰¹ According to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ the authorities of the criticism of ḥadīth are of the opinion that whenever a ḥadīth transmitter transmits a ḥadīth single-handedly, first of all, it should be investigated whether this isolated tradition is different from a non-isolated tradition, the transmitters of which are considered more reliable. If this difference is found, the isolated tradition is to be rejected. If not, the trustworthiness of the ḥadīth transmitter who transmitted the isolated one should be investigated. If he is proved to be reliable and trustworthy, his report is to be accepted.²⁰²

On the ground of the preceding, Ibn ʿArabi's claim that the authenticity of

the tradition "I was a prophet when Adam was still between the water and the clay" has been established by means of "unveiling" cannot be accepted. This is due to the fact that this tradition differs from another one which is reported by transmitters who are considered more reliable. i.e. "I was a prophet when Adam was still between the soul and the body". Later, however, we will see that the first tradition is supported by another one which is accepted by Ibn Taymiyya. The acceptance of the other traditions which Ibn ʿArabī claims to be proved authentic by means of "unveiling", and do not differ from other authentic reports, depends on the fulfilment of the other condition, i.e. the trustworthiness of the transmitter. The transmitter in this case is Ibn ʿArabī, who claims to have been informed of the authenticity of these traditions by the prophet himself through "unveiling". This means that the fulfilment of the other condition depends on finding an agreement among Muslim scholars on the trustworthiness and the reliability of Ibn ʿArabī, which is by no means possible.

2.4. Notes

1. Abū Shāma, ^cA. b. I., Tarājim Rijāl al-Qarnayn al-Sādis wa'l-Sābi^c, Cairo, 1947, p.170; Claude Addas, Ibn ^cArabi, Paris, 1989, p.34.
2. E.I.², article 'Ibn al-^cArabi'; Ibid., article 'Ḥatim al-Ṭā'i'.
3. al-Maqqari, A. b. M., Nafḥ al-Ṭib, Beirut, 1986, ed. I. ^cAbbās, vol.2, p.175.
4. al-Ghubrīnī, A. b. A., Unwān al-Dirāya, ed. A. Nuwaihīd, Beirut, 1969, p.156.
5. E.R., article 'Ibn al-^cArabi'.
6. Abū Shāma, Tarājim, p.170; al-Ṣafadī, KH. b. A, al-Wafī bi'l-Wafayāt, Damascus, 1931-, vol.4, p.173.
7. al-Maqqari, op.cit., vol.2, p.163.
8. Ḥusaynī, S. A. Q., Ibn al-^cArabi, Lahore, n.d., p.2.
9. Ibn al-^cArabi, The Bezels of Wisdom, Translation and introduction by R. W. J. Austin, London, 1980, p.1.
10. al-Maqqari, op.cit., vol.2, p.162.
11. E.R., article 'Ibn al-^cArabi'; Ḥusaynī, op.cit, p.3.
12. Ibn ^cArabi mentions that his father was a close friend of Averroes; see Ibn ^cArabi, Fut, ed. O. Yahya, Cairo, 1972-, vol.2, p.372; see also, Ḥusaynī, op.cit, p.2.
13. Ibn ^cArabi, Fut, Cairo, 1293, vol.2, p.559; Chittick, The Sūfī Path of Knowledge, New York, 1989, p.383.
14. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Beirut, 1981, vol.4, p.220.
15. Ibn ^cArabi, Fut, vol.6, p.428.
16. E.R., article 'Ibn al-^cArabi'.
17. Ibid., p.353.
18. Ibn ^cArabi Fut, vol.2, p.372; Ibn ^cArabi, Sūfis of Andalusia, Translated with introduction and notes by R. J. Austin, Oxford, 1971, pp.23-4.
19. Ibn ^cArabi, Sūfis of Andalusia, Introduction by Austin, p.34.
20. al-Maqqari, op.cit., vol.2, p.165.

21. Ibn ʿArabi, The Tarjumān al-Ashwāq, Translated by R. J. Nicholson, London, 1978, pp.10-12.
22. Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, p.143.
23. See above, p.46.
24. See Chap.7, pp.207-08.
25. Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, Introduction by Austin, p.38.
26. Addas, op.cit, p.354.
27. Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, p.157.
28. Ibid., Introduction by Austin, p.39.
29. Baldick, Mystical Islam, p.76.
30. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.180; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.6, p.196; Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, Introduction by Austin, p.39.
31. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.164.
32. Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, Introduction by Austin, p.41; Corbin, H., Creative Imagination in the Ṣūfism of Ibn al-ʿArabi, Paris, 1969, pp.69-71.
 Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (d.672/1273) is considered the most famous and influential among Ṣūfī poets. He lived in Turkey, for which his family had left their homeland, in northern Afghanistan, because of fear of the Mongols. His Mathnawī-yi Maʿnawī, the Poem in Rhyming Couplets, is still the subject of academic research in the Muslim East and the Christian West. See Baldick, Mystical Islam, pp.89-91; E.R., article 'Rūmī'.
33. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, pp.182-3; Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, Introduction by Austin, p.42.
34. Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, Introduction by Austin, pp.42-3.
35. Ibid., p. 43.
36. Ibid., pp.43-4.
37. See for example Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.7, pp. 289-92; see also Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, p.105.
38. E.I.², article 'Ibn al-ʿArabi'.

39. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.166.
40. Ibid., vol.2, p.179.
41. Addas , op.cit, pp.360-2.
42. Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.47.
43. Addas, op.cit, p.361.
44. Abū Shāma, Tarājim, p.170; Addas, op.cit, p.362.
45. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.179.
46. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.4, p.260.
47. Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, Introduction by Austin, p.46.
48. See above, p.39.
49. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.172.
50. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.170.
51. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.10, p.79.
52. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.162.
53. Ibid., p.162; Ibn al-Abbār, al-Takmila fī Kitāb al-Sila, Madrid, 1886-7, vol.2., p.577.
54. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.162; Ibn al-Abbār, op.cit., vol.1, pp.276-81.
55. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.163.
56. Ibid., vol.2, p.162; Ibn al-Abbār, op.cit., vol.1, pp.257-8.
57. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.164; al-Ḍabbī, Bughayat al-Multamis fī Tārīkh Rijāl al-Andalus, Madrid, 1884, vol.3, p.88.
58. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.164.
59. Ibid., vol.2, p.164; Ibn al-Abbār, op.cit., vol.2, pp.494-8.
60. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.164; Ibn al-Abbār, op.cit., vol.2, pp.651-2.
61. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.164; Ibn al-Abbār, op.cit., vol.2, pp.647-8.
62. Abū Shāma, Tarājim, pp.106-07.
63. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.175; al-Ghubrīnī, op.cit., pp.137-42.
64. al-Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.164.
65. Ibid., vol.2, p.164.

66. Ibid., vol.2, p.164.
67. Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, pp.63-9.
68. Ibid., pp.69-73.
69. Ibid., pp.73-6.
70. Ibid., pp.79-83.
71. Ibid., pp.143-6.
72. Ibid., pp.142-3.
73. Ibid., pp.76-9.
74. Ibid., pp.146-8.
75. Ibid., pp.83-7.
76. Ibid., pp.101-10.
77. Ibid., pp.116-21.
78. Ibid., pp.148-9.
79. Ibid., p.157.
80. Ibid., p.121.
81. Baldick, Mystical Islam, p.82.
82. E.I.², article 'Ibn al-ʿArabi'.
83. C. Brockelmann, Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur, Leiden, 1898-1949, S.1, pp.791-802.
84. Yahya, O, Histoire et classification de l'oeuvre d' Ibn ʿArabi, Damascus, 1964, vol.1, p.139 - vol.2, p.532.
85. See above, p.38.
86. al-Dhahabi, M. b. A., al-ʿIbar fī Khbar man Ghabar, Kuwait City, 1960-6, vol.5, p.188.
87. Humphreys, R. S., From Saladin to the Mongols, New York, 1977, p.471.
88. Abū Shāma, Tarājim, p.169.
89. al-Maqqari, op.cit., vol.2, pp.178-9.
90. Ibn ʿArabi, Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, pp.158-9.
91. Ibn al-ʿImād, Shadharāt al-Dhahab, Cairo, 1351/1932, vol.5, pp.192-202.

92. G. H. A. Juynboll, Muslim Tradition, Cambridge, 1983, p.185.
93. Baldick, Mystical Islam, p.27.
94. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.4, pp.281-3.
95. In this arrangement I have taken into consideration Nawawī's opinion that the Sunan of Ibn Māja is not to be considered one of the basic canonical collections of ḥadīth.
96. al-kutub al-khamsa (The five canonical collections of traditions) are: 1. The Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī. 2. The Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim. 3. The Sunan of Abū Dāwūd. 4. The Sunan of al-Nasā'ī. 5. The Sunan of al-Tirmidhī; see Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, Muqaddimat Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, Beirut, 1978, pp.18-19.
97. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.7, p.125; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Beirut, 1978, vol.4, p.2017; Ibn ʿArabi, al-Fut, vol.2, p.114; Ibn ʿArabi, Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam, ed. O. Yahya, Cairo, 1946, vol.1, p.199.
98. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.73, vol.8, p.175; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.149.
99. W. A. Graham, Divine Word and Prophetic Word in Early Islam, The Hague, 1977, p.177; Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.2, p.47; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, p.325.
100. Graham, op.cit., p.173; Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.7, p.190; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.138; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.215.
101. al-Tirmidhī, al-Sunan, Cairo, 1963, vol.9, p.105; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.302.
102. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.74; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, p.343.
103. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, pp.100 and 272; al-Nasā'ī, al-Sunan, Beirut, 1988, vol.7, p.61; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.214.
104. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.162; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.4, p.140.
105. Graham, op.cit., p.134; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.164; Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.8, p.180; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, p.223.
106. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.161; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, p.116.
107. al-Nasā'ī, op.cit., vol.3, p.145; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.7, p.247.
108. Graham, op.cit., p.179; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.1990; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut,

vol.4, pp.369-70.

109. Graham, op.cit., p.180.
110. Baldick, Mystical Islam, p.27.
111. Graham, op.cit., p.183; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.296; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.186.
112. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.80; Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.9, p.186; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.73.
113. Graham, op.cit., p.163; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.6, p.270; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.202; Abū Dāwūd, al-Sunan, Beirut, n.d., vol.4, p.59.
114. Graham, op.cit., p.163.
115. Ibid., pp.161-2; Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.8, pp.452-5; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, p.169.
116. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.100; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.1775; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.86.
117. "The qibla is the direction towards which the Muslim turns in prayer"; see Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.152; Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.106; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.123. In some places Ibn ʿArabi cites this tradition as, "God is in the qibla of the one who prays." This version is not in the canonical collections.
118. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.168; Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.25; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.135.
119. Graham, op.cit., p.119; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.2112; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.180.
120. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.1836; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Translated into English by Abd al-Ḥamīd Siddīqī, Lahore, 1975, vol.4, pp.1259-60; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.206.
121. Graham, op.cit., p.127; Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.8, p.171; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.226.
122. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.1749; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, English, vol.4,

- p.1209; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.5, p.114.
123. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Translated by Dr. M. M. Khān, Medina, 1973, vol.6, pp.490-1; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.6, pp.143-4.
 124. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.222; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.5, p.168.
 125. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.1774; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.8, p.176.
 126. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.200; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, p.142.
 127. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.1791; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.5, p.68; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, English, vol.4, p.1235.
 128. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.327; Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.252; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.198.
 129. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.7, p.107; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.6, p.169.
 130. Research carried out in the 1920s by two scholars, one British and one Egyptian, shows that the muʿallaqāt in their present shape were the product of a later period than they were thought to be; see Albert Hourani, A History of the Arab Peoples, Cambridge, 1991, pp.12-13.
 131. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.116. According to ʿIrāqī, the well-known ḥadīth-expert (d.806/1403) and the author of al-Mughnī, in which he investigated the authenticity of the traditions which are used by al-Ghazālī in Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn, the isnād through which this tradition is reported is weak; see ʿIrāqī, al-Mughnī ʿan Ḥaml al-Asfār, in the margin of Ghazālī's Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn, Cairo, 1334/1915, vol.3, p.29.
 132. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.236; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.8, p.97.
 133. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.1, p.3; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.4, pp.90-1.
 134. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.38; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, p.142.
 135. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.8, pp.376-7; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.4, p.225.
 136. al-Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.8, pp.529-30; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.350.
 137. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.1, pp.336-7; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1,

p.162.

138. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.378; Nawawī, al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawīyya, with English translation by Ezzeddin Ibrahim & D. Johnson-Davies, Damascus, 1977, pp.28-33; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, 1293 A. H., vol.2, pp.163-4.
139. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.9, p.106; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.371; al-Tibrīzī, Walī al-Dīn, Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ, English translation with explanatory notes by James Robson, Lahore, 1963-5, vol.3, pp.1231-2; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.214.
140. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.186; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.1230; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.291.
141. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.218; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.291.
142. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.10, p.82; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.1234; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.3, p.176.
143. al-Dārimī, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Sunan al-Dārimī, Cairo, 1978, vol.1, pp.115-16; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.292; Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, p.405, n.11; Wensinck, Arent Jan, Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane, Leiden, 1936, vol.1, p.295.
144. Ibn Ḥanbal, al-Musnad, Cairo, 1313/1895, vol.2, p.541; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.365.
145. ʿIrāqī, op.cit., vol.1, p.92.
146. ʿAbd al-Raʿūf al-Manāwī, al-Taysīr bi Sharḥ al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr. A commentary on Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's collection of traditions entitled al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr. Beirut, 1970, vol.2, p.391; Nawawī, Bustān al-ʿĀrifīn, Beirut, 1985, p.27; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.7, p.65.
147. Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.203; Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.257; Badiʿ al-Zamān Fūrūzanfār, Aḥādīth-i Mathnawī, Tehran, 1955, p.29; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.203.
148. Muḥammad b. Khalīl al-Qāwuqjī, al-Lu'lu' al-Marṣūʿ, Cairo, n.d., p.61.

149. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, Cairo, 1293, vol.2, p.399; William C. Chittick, The Sūfī Path of Knowledge, p.391.
 150. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.79; Abū Ibrāhīm al-Bukhārī, called al-Mustamlī, Sharh-i Taʿarruf, Tehran, 1328/1910, vol.2, p.123; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.4, p.217.
 151. Abū Yazīd is described as a "wild" and "controversial" early figure; he "lived in a village called Bastām in northern Iran and died about 875. A number of sayings are attributed to him, of a type termed the shath, the 'ecstatic utterance' in which the mystic gives voice to his most intimate experience...some of these sayings were commented upon in Baghdad less than forty years after his death, and were preserved in a late tenth-century work. More were collected in a book written by a man who died in 1084. In general, it can be said that many of these sayings have strong points of resemblance, and together presents the words of one man or at least a very limited circle of disciples. Debate has centred on the question of whether Abū Yazīd was subject to an Indian religious influence."
- For more details see Baldick, Mystical Islam, pp.35-7.
152. Ghazālī, Ihyā', vol.3, p.13; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.3, p.325.
 153. ʿIrāqī, op.cit., vol.3, p.13; cf., Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb, Hayderabad, 1325-7/1907-9, vol.1, pp.473-8.
 154. Ghazālī, Ihyā', vol.4, p.84; Abū Ibrāhīm, op.cit., vol.2, p.173 and vol.3, p.37; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.3, p.372.
 155. ʿIrāqī, op.cit., vol.4, p.84.
 156. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, pp.196-7; Fūrūzanfār, op.cit., pp.81 and 141; Ibrāhīm b. ʿAlī called al-Ḥuṣārī, Zahr al-Ādāb, Beirut, 1972, vol.1, p.60; Abū Ibrāhīm, op.cit., vol.3, p.98; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.159.
 157. ʿIrāqī, op.cit., vol.4, p.20.
 158. Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Walī, Rasā'il Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Walī, Tehran, 1341-8/1962-9, vol.8, pp.71 and 219; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.2, p.102.
 159. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.7, p.370. So far, I could not trace this tradition.
 160. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.7, p.370. So far, I could not trace this tradition.
 161. Ibid., vol.1, p.286; Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.74.

162. Qāwuqjī, op.cit., p.86.
163. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, Nahj al-Balāgha, Cairo, 1306/1888, vol.4, p.547.
164. Abū Ibrāhīm al-Bukhārī, op.cit., vol.2, p.129; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.4, p.91.
165. Qāwuqjī, op.cit., pp.66-7.
166. Aḥādīth-i Mathnawī is a book by the twentieth-century Iranian scholar Badiʿ al-Zamān Fūrūzanfār about the ḥadīth referred to in the Mathnawī-yi Maʿnawī of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (d.672/1273).

In spite of its Arabic derivation -from the word mathnā, "two by two"- Mathnawī is a word originally used by Persians to designate "a poem written in rhyming couplets". The greatest of this type of poems is the Mathnawī-yi Maʿnawī composed by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī; see E.I.², article 'Mathnawī'; Morrison, George (ed.), History of Persian Literature from the Beginning of the Islamic Period to the Present Day, with contributions by George Morrison, Julian Baldick and R. Shafīʿī Kadkanī, Leiden, 1981, pp.10-11; Hodgson, M. G. S., The Venture of Islam, Chicago, 1974, vol.2, p.244.

167. Fūrūzanfār, op.cit., p.39.
168. Ghazālī, Iḥyā', vol.1, p.88; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.3, p.187.
169. ʿIrāqī, op.cit., vol.1, p.88.
170. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.3, p.187. .
171. Ghazālī, Iḥyā', vol.4, p.86; ʿIrāqī, op.cit., vol.4, p.86; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.2, p.303.
172. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, Cairo, 1293 A.H., vol.2, p.150; Ibn ʿArabī, Les Illuminations de la Mecque, The Meccan Illuminations: Textes Choisis / Selected texts. Sous la direction de Michel Chodkiewicz, avec la Collaboration de William C. Chittick, Cyrille Chodkiewicz, Denis Gril et James Morris. Paris, 1988, p.99; Abū Ibrāhīm al-Bukhārī, op.cit., vol.3, p.79.

"Sulamī, who came from north-eastern Iran and died in 1021, is...an unoriginal and unsurprising writer. A wealthy man, he was educated by his

grandfather, who belonged to the grouping of mystics called the malāmatiyya, because of their devotion to bringing 'blame' (malāma) upon themselves...Sulamī is important mainly for putting Ṣūfī interpretation of the Koran firmly on the map, with others' opinions arranged in the commentary which bears his name, and for compiling a collection of Ṣūfī biographies."

See Baldick, Mystical Islam, pp.57-8.

173. ʿIrāqī, op.cit., vol.1, p.19.
174. Ghazālī, Ihyā', vol.1, p.74; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.2, p.251.
175. Qāwuqjī, op.cit., p.26.
176. Ghazālī, Mishkāṭ al-Anwār, The Niche for Lights. A translation with introduction by W. H. T. Gairdner, London, 1924, pp.76-7; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.1, p.349.
177. Fūrūzanfār, op.cit., pp.50-1; Ghazālī, Mishkāṭ, p.88.
178. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.266; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.212. So far, I could not trace this tradition.
179. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.272; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.2, p.171.
180. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.272.
181. Qāwuqjī, op.cit., p.61.
182. Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.4, pp.127 and 128.
183. al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, Nawādir al-Uṣūl, al-Qaṣṭanṭīniyya, n.d., p.345; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.1, p.142.

al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, a famous Ṣūfī of Khurasan, or Soviet Central Asia. He "was born sometime before 855 and lived at least to the age of 65". The significance of his teachings lies in his theory of al-walāya ("Friendship with God"), and in particular, in his concept of the Seal of the Friends (khatm al-awliyā'). With regard to the question, "Who is the Seal of the Friends?" Tirmidhī presents 156 questions to be answered by Ṣūfīs with claim to this status. Rising to the challenge, Ibn ʿArabī gave answers to these questions in the Futūḥāt. See Baldick, Mystical Islam, pp.42-4.

184. al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, op.cit., p.345.

185. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.2, p.361.
186. al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn, al-Durar al-Muntathira fi'l-Aḥādīth al-Mushtahira, Beirut, 1984, p.135; al-ʿAjlūnī al-Jarrāhī, Kashf al-Khafā' wa Muṣīl al-Ilbās ʿamma Ishtahara min Aḥādīth ʿalā Alsinat al-Nās, Aleppo, n.d., vol.2, p.83.
187. Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Bukhārī, al-Kalabādhī, al-Taʿarruf li Madhhab Ahl al-Taṣawwuf, Cairo, 1933, p.7; ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, called Ibn al-Athīr, Usud al-Ghāba, Cairo, 1285-7/1869-71, vol.1, pp.355-6; A. J. Arberry, The Doctrine of The Sūfīs, (Kitāb al-Taʿarruf li Madhhab ahl al-Taṣawwuf). Translated from the Arabic of Abū Bakr al-Kalabādhī. Cambridge, 1935, p.117; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.5, p.490.
188. Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.215; Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.273.
189. Ghazālī, Iḥyā', vol.3, p.8; ʿIrāqī, op.cit., vol.3, p.8.
190. Ibn Kathīr, Shamā'il al-Rasūl, Cairo, 1967, p.252; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.2, p.314.
191. ʿIrāqī, op.cit., vol.1, p.101; cf., Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb, vol.4, pp.380-2.
192. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.2, pp.357-9; W. C. Chittick, The Sūfī Path of Knowledge, p.251.
193. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, Cairo, 1293 A.H., vol.4, p.34.
194. See above, p.49.
195. See above, p.49.
196. "Rūmī writes: 'If you have seen me, you have seen God.'" See Javad, Traditions of the Prophet, New York, 1981, p.36.
197. The Qur'ān, 53:3.
198. The Qur'ān, 3:32.
199. The Qur'ān, 3:31.
200. Subḥī al-Ṣāliḥ, ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth wa Muṣṭalahuhu, Dimashq, 1963, p.251; Nawawī's opinion on khabar al-wāḥid is different from that of the majority of ḥadīth experts. He places khabar al-wāḥid in the ṣaḥīḥ category.

Nevertheless, he states that this only means that the conditions of the ṣaḥīḥ are fulfilled in this tradition, and that it does not mean that this type of tradition constitutes a decisive argument. See Nawawī, al-Taqrīb wa'l-Taysīr, op.cit., vol.1, p.75.

201. Juynboll, Muslim Traditions, p.267.

202. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, op.cit., pp. 36-7.

Chapter (3)

Ibn ʿArabī

Interpretation of Hadith

Although Ibn ʿArabī uses all the traditions which appeared in Chapter 2 in a significant manner, it is beyond the nature of this research to discuss the ways in which Ibn ʿArabī uses and interprets all of them. Therefore, from among these traditions only those which are used by Ibn ʿArabī to establish his main theories will be referred to in this Chapter.

3.1. The types of knowledge

Ibn ʿArabī distinguishes between three degrees of knowledge. He says in this connection:

"The sciences are of three levels. (The first) is the science of reason, which is every knowledge which is actualised for you by the fact that it is self-evident or after considering proofs, on condition that the purport of that proof is discovered...

The second science is the science of states (ahwāl), which cannot be reached except through tasting. No man of reason can define the states, nor can any proof be adduced for knowing them, naturally enough. Take for example knowledge of the sweetness of honey, the bitterness of aloes, the pleasure of sexual intercourse, love, ecstasy, yearning, and similar types of knowledge. It is impossible for any one to know any of these sciences without being qualified by them and tasting them...

The third knowledge is the sciences of the mysteries (asrār). It is the knowledge which is 'beyond the stage of reason.' It is knowledge through the blowing (nafth) of the Holy Spirit (rūḥ al-qudus) into the heart (rūḥ), and it is specific to the prophet or the Friends of God. It is of two sorts:

The first sort can be perceived by reason, just like the first of the kinds above. However, the person who knows it does not acquire it through consideration; rather, the level of this knowledge grants it.

The second sort is divided into two kinds. The first kind is connected to the second kind above, but its 'state' is more noble. The second kind is the sciences of reports (akhbār), and concerning them one can say that they are true or false, unless the truthfulness of the report-giver and his inerrancy in what he says have been established for the one who receives the report.

Such is the report given by the prophets from God, like their reporting about the Garden and what is within it. Hence the words of the prophet that there is a Garden belong to the science of reports. But his words that at the resurrection there is a pool sweeter than honey belong to the science of states, the science of tasting. And his words, 'God is, and nothing is with him,' belong to the science of reason, perceived by consideration.

The knower of this last kind -the science of mysteries- knows and exhausts all sciences. The possessors of the other sciences are not like that. So there is no knowledge more noble than this all-encompassing knowledge, which comprises all objects of knowledge."¹

As ʿilm al-asrār represents a cornerstone in Ibn ʿArabī's thought, and he uses many traditions to support this concept, it is his interpretation of the traditions concerning this type of knowledge that I will discuss.

The prophet is reported to have said, "The Qur'ān has literal and hidden meaning." It has already been said that this ḥadīth is considered sound by ḥadīth experts. Ibn ʿArabī reports this tradition with a little difference in the wording. According to Ibn ʿArabī's narration the tradition says, "There is no verse of the Qur'ān which does not have a literal meaning (ẓāhir), a hidden meaning (bāṭin), a limit (ḥadd) and a place to which one may ascend (muṭṭalaʿ)."² Ibn ʿArabī uses this tradition to demonstrate that when God closed against the people the door of sending prophets and messengers, He left another door open to them. This is the capability of having knowledge directly from God. This is knowledge of the meaning of what God has revealed to the prophet Muḥammad (i.e. the Qur'ān). Ibn ʿArabī supports his understanding of this tradition by a statement attributed to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. In this statement the latter is reported to have said, "Revelation has come to its end with the death of the prophet, and there is nothing left at our disposal except that God might bestow upon one of his servants an understanding of the Qur'ān."³ Furthermore, Ibn ʿArabī adds that this tradition indicates that knowledge with regard to the Qur'ān belongs to four levels or categories. Accordingly, men of God (rijal Allāh) also fall into four categories with regard to their understanding of the Qur'ān. Every category has its qutb (Pole).⁴ The men of the first category, ẓāhir, have "the power to exercise free disposal" (taṣarruf) in the

world of the sovereignty and the visible (ʿālam al-mulk wa'l-shahāda). The men of the second category, bāṭin, "have the power to exercise free disposal" in the world of "the unseen" and the dominion (ʿālam al-ghayb wa'l-malakūt). The men of the third category, ḥadd, "have the power to exercise free disposal" in the world of the spirits of the devils (ʿālam al-arwāḥ al-nāriyya). The men of the fourth category, muṭṭalaʿ, "have the power to exercise free disposal" in the divine names (al-asmā' al-ilāhiyya).⁵

When we look at the way in which Ibn ʿArabī has interpreted this tradition, we find that he has started the interpretation in the traditional way which we find in the traditional commentaries on ḥadīth. That is to say that he used the literal meaning of the tradition to reach the conclusion that men of learning are on different levels with regard to their understanding of the Qur'ān. He also used a statement attributed to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib to support his opinion, which is also traditional. Statements of the companions are often quoted in commentaries of ḥadīth to support a certain understanding. Nevertheless, he got to the point where he said that specific men "have the power to exercise free disposal" in certain domains. This is not stated in the ḥadīth. And it seems that Ibn ʿArabī used what he refers to as al-maʿrifa al-sūfiyya (mystical knowledge), or al-maʿrifa al-ghayr ʿādiyya (the unusual knowledge), or ʿilm al-asrār (the secret knowledge).⁶ This type of interpretation is usually referred to as ta'wīl. But it would be better not to use this word with Ibn ʿArabī, who has often condemned the use of ta'wīl in interpreting the Qur'ān and the ḥadīth. To Ibn ʿArabī the word ta'wīl, which Corbin claims to be a cornerstone in the former's thought, has a different implication. Chittick, who finds the term ta'wīl inappropriate to be used in the case of Ibn ʿArabī, states the following:

"Those who have been introduced to Ibn al-ʿArabī through the writings of Henry Corbin have learned that ta'wīl is one of the cornerstones of his thought. One cannot object to Corbin for saying that Ibn al-ʿArabī interprets the verses of the Qur'ān, but one objects to his choosing the word

ta'wīl to designate the process, since Ibn al-^ḥArabī does not use it in the positive sense in which Corbin understands it.⁷ Without doubt, Corbin was led to employ the term because of ta'wīl's primary importance in Shi'ite thought. As he remarks, 'It is not possible to utter the word ta'wīl without suggesting Shi'ism.'⁸ Corbin means to imply that Ibn al-^ḥArabī leaned toward Shi'ite beliefs, but in fact Corbin is merely expressing his own conviction that anyone as important as Ibn al-^ḥArabī had to be influenced by Shi'ism.⁹ This is not to claim that Ibn al-^ḥArabī never employs the term ta'wīl in a positive sense corresponding roughly to what Corbin had in mind. But such rare passages...invariably speak of ta'wīl in its Qur'ānic context¹⁰ and do not contradict Ibn al-^ḥArabī's generally critical views of ta'wīl. For the most part, Ibn al-^ḥArabī considers ta'wīl as interpretation of the Qur'ān and the sayings of the prophet in a way that will not compromise the principles of rational thought. Instead of having faith in the literal accuracy of the revelation and trying to understand it on God's terms (e.g., through the practice of the religion and 'God fearing'), the interpreter accepts the supremacy of reason and its ability to judge all things. In effect, reason becomes the scale in which everything else must be weighed, including the Word of God. Practically all modern hermeneutics and scriptural exegesis fit neatly into the category of ta'wīl as Ibn al-^ḥArabī understands it."¹¹

To the type of knowledge which Ibn ^ḥArabī calls al-ma'rifā al-ṣūfiyya, al-ghayr ṣādiyya or ʿilm al-asrār belongs ʿilm al-bāṭin (the hidden knowledge). Some traditions are used by Ibn ^ḥArabī to demonstrate that the concept of ʿilm al-bāṭin is originated by the prophet Muḥammad. In one of these traditions the prophet is reported to have said, "There is a knowledge that has the guise of the hidden (hay'at al-maknūn); none knows it but those who have knowledge of God. When they speak of it, none denies it but those who are deluded about God." It has already been said that ḥadīth scholars regard this tradition as a weak one. But one should also point out that this ḥadīth is not the only evidence that Ibn ^ḥArabī quotes to support the concept of ʿilm al-bāṭin. Before quoting this tradition Ibn ^ḥArabī quoted Qur'ānic verses concerning Khadīr¹², who is believed to have possessed this type of knowledge. "God says concerning his servant Khadīr, 'We taught him a knowledge from us' (Qur'ān 18: 64); And he says, '(He created man) and taught him the explanation' (Qur'ān 55: 4)."¹³ However, to Ibn ^ḥArabī, the type of hidden knowledge that the above mentioned tradition talks about, is not as precious as another type of it. This type of hidden knowledge can be propagated,

the other cannot. He says in this connection:

"Such is the situation, yet this is a knowledge that can be spoken about. So what do you think about their knowledge that cannot be spoken about? For not every knowledge can be expressed. These kinds of knowledge (that cannot be expressed) are all sciences of tasting (ʿulūm al-adhwāq)."¹⁴

To support the idea that there is a type of ʿilm al-bāṭin which cannot be spoken about Ibn ʿArabī quotes a tradition which is reported in the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī. In this tradition Abū Hurayra is reported to have said, "I have committed to memory (ḥamaltu) two types of knowledge which I have learned from the prophet. I have propagated one of them to you and if I propagate the second, my head would be cut off." Although the authenticity of Abū Hurayra's report is acknowledged by Ibn ʿArabī, the latter does not believe that the former had the experience of tasting this type of knowledge. In Ibn al-ʿArabī's opinion Abū Hurayra was only a carrier or a transmitter with regard to this type of knowledge. He says in this connection:

"Abū Hurayra stated that he had carried this knowledge (ḥamalahu) from the prophet. So he was just a carrier (nāqil) without having the experience of tasting this knowledge (ʿan ghayri dhawq)."¹⁵

From this one understands that the part of ʿilm al-bāṭin that cannot be spoken about is the tasting of the inner meaning. Ibn ʿArabī calls the people who experience this type of knowledge afṛād ("solitaries").¹⁶

Ibn ʿArabī supports his understanding of Abū Hurayra's tradition with three pieces of evidence. The first is a statement attributed to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. It is reported that ʿAlī used to place his palm on his chest, sigh and say, "There is plentiful knowledge in here, if only there are holders who are capable of it."¹⁷ The second is a statement by Ibn ʿAbbās concerning the interpretation of the Qur'ānic verse, "Allāh is he who created seven heavens, and of the earth the like thereof. The divine command comes down in their midst that you may know that Allāh has power over all things in his knowledge."¹⁸ Ibn ʿAbbās is reported to have said, "If I propagate the meaning of this verse you will stone me to death."¹⁹ The third is a

couple of verses which Ibn al-^ʿArabī attributes in one place to al-Sharīf ^ʿAlī al-Ridā, the eighth Shīʿite Imām (d.203/818),²⁰ in another place to ^ʿAlī Zayn al-^ʿĀbidīn, the fourth Shīʿite Imām (d.94/712-13).²¹ But according to other sources they were neither composed by al-Sharīf al-Ridā nor by ^ʿAlī Zayn al-^ʿĀbidīn.²² The two verses are:

If I reveal the heart of some knowledge

I would be told that I am a pagan

And some Muslims would spill my blood

Believing their detestable deed the best to be done

Ibn ^ʿArabī states that both companions referred to ʿilm al-bāṭin, when they uttered the above mentioned statements. He also believes that the two verses refer to the same type of knowledge.

At the beginning of this section reference has been made to Ibn al-^ʿArabī's statement in which he claims that ʿilm al-asrār "is specific to the prophet or the Friends of God." Apparently this claim was confronted with opposition from Muslim jurists. So, Ibn ^ʿArabī gives a detailed argument to defend this claim. He says:

"There is no doubt that you agree that it is obligatory to accept and believe in all the genuine traditions of the prophet in which he ascribes to God attributes such as: happiness (al-farah), laughing (ḍahik), astonishment (taʿajjub), cheerfulness (tabashbush), wrath (ghaḍab), hesitation (al-taraddud), dislike (al-karah), love (al-mahabba), longing (al-shawq) and the like. So if this divine presence (al-hadra al-ilāhiyya) blows into the hearts of the Friends 'fragrant blasts of mercy', they spiritually realise divine matters like the ones which are referred to in the above-mentioned ḥadīth which you and I have accepted and believed in. They spiritually realise these matters through unveiling (kashf) and 'God's self-displaying (tajalli)'. I say if the Friend ascribes to God attributes like the ones referred to in the above-mentioned ḥadīth, don't you accuse him of atheism (zandaqa)? Or as al-Junayd (d.910)²³ said, 'don't you say: This is a mushabbih (one who ascribes human characteristics to God), or ʿābid wathan (pagan)? How can he ascribe to God human characteristics? The pagans have not done more than that.' Or don't you kill him, as ^ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn has said (referring to the above-mentioned couple of verses)? Or don't you authorise his killing

as Ibn ʿAbbās has said (referring to the above-mentioned statement of Ibn ʿAbbās)?

Then what have you accepted and believed in when you heard the prophet ascribing to God attributes which cannot be accepted through rational proofs (adilla ʿaqliyya)? And the interpretation (taʿwīl) of these traditions is prohibited. However, the Ashʿari²⁴ has interpreted them in certain ways to suit his claim of God's transcendence (tanzīh). And where is fairness (when you make the previous accusations against the Friends)? (When you hear the Friend ascribing to God attributes like the ones referred to in the above-mentioned traditions), why not say that the omnipotence of God (al-qudra) is capable of bestowing upon this Friend the secret knowledge which it has bestowed upon the prophet? Because the secret knowledge is not exclusive to the prophet. And the prophet neither denied his community access to this knowledge nor did he speak ill of it. Not only this but he said, 'If there were to be people who could divine the unknown (muhaddathūn) in the Muslim nation, ʿUmar would be one of them.' Thus, the prophet confirmed that there are people who are not prophets who could divine the unknown. These people might be bestowed with this type of knowledge (knowledge of God), as this knowledge has nothing to do with 'law-giving' (tashrīʿ al-ahkām). Because 'law-giving' is one of the special functions of the prophets.²⁵

Ibn al-ʿArabī's classification of knowledge shows that he considers the secret knowledge more valuable than all other types. This is because "it is knowledge through the blowing of the Holy Spirit into the heart." In other words it is knowledge that comes directly and freshly from God. Through it the Friend might even come to know if a certain tradition is authentic or not, as has been demonstrated earlier. In this Ibn ʿArabī is influenced by earlier mystics. Namely, Abū Madyan (d.1197-8)²⁶ and Abū Yazīd, whose statements in this respect, Ibn ʿArabī frequently quotes. He says in one place of the Futūḥāt:

"One of the characteristics of the exoteric scholar in defending himself is that he is ignorant of him who says, 'My Lord has given me to understand.' He considers himself superior to the one who says this and to the true possessor of knowledge. But he who is of the folk of Allāh says, 'God has cast into my inmost consciousness what he meant by this ruling in this verse.' Or he says, 'I saw the messenger of God in a vision, and he informed me of the soundness of this report which has been related from him and what it signifies for him.'

Concerning this station and its soundness, Abū Yazīd addressed the exoteric scholars with his words, 'You take your knowledge dead from dead, but we take our knowledge from the Alive who does not die.'²⁷

The likes of ourselves say, 'My heart told me of my Lord.' You say, 'So and so told me.' 'Where is he?' 'Dead.' 'And he had it from so and so.' 'Where is he?' 'Dead.' When someone said to Shaykh Abū Madyan, 'It is related from so and so, from so and so, from so and so,' he used to say, 'We don't want to eat dried meat. Come on, bring me "fresh flesh"!' Thereby he would lift up the aspirations of his companions. He meant: This is the words of so and so. What do you yourself say? What God-given knowledge has God singled out for you? Speak from your Lord, and forget about, 'So and so related from so and so.' They ate fresh meat, and the Giver has not died. He is 'nearer' to you 'than the jugular vein'(Qur'ān / 50:16)."²⁸

Ibn ʿArabī claims that the first to establish this concept was the prophet himself, who expressed this through "allusion" (ishāra). That was when the prophet exposed himself to the rain, saying, "It has come fresh from its Lord." The following are statements which bear witness to Ibn ʿArabī's opinion on this point:

In the Futūḥāt he says:

"Why do you not become 'newly acquainted' with your Lord? Even rain is higher in level than you, for the messenger of God exposed himself to the rain when it fell and uncovered his head so that the rain would strike it. When asked about that, he said, 'It is newly acquainted with my Lord.' He said that to teach and alert us."²⁹

In the Fuṣūṣ Ibn ʿArabī says:

"The messenger of God would expose himself to the rain, uncovering his head to it, saying that the rain had come fresh from its Lord. Consider then, how majestic, sublime, and clear is our prophet's knowledge of God. Even so, the rain had power over the best of humanity by virtue of its proximity to its Lord, like a divine emissary summoning him in his essence, in a silent way. He exposed himself to it so that he might receive what it had brought from its Lord to him. Indeed, he would not have exposed himself to it but for the divine benefit implicit in its contact with him."³⁰

3.2. God And human kind

The prophet is reported to have said, "God created Adam in his form."³¹

In his Futūḥāt Ibn ʿArabī gives a detailed answer to the question, "What is the meaning of the prophet's saying, 'God created Adam in his form'?" The answer is:

"Be it known to you that whatever is given form by a form-giver is identical with the form-giver, not other than him. Without doubt the cosmos was given form by God in accordance with the manifestation of its entity. Man, who is Adam, consists of an individual in whom the cosmos is brought together (majmūʿ), for he is the small man, the epitome of the great man (i.e., the macrocosm). Man cannot perceive the whole cosmos, because of its greatness and tremendous size. In contrast man is small in size, and perception embraces him in respect of his form and anatomy and the spiritual faculties that he carries. God arranged within him everything outside of him other than God. So the reality of the divine name (Allāh), which caused him to appear, and the form in which he became manifest are connected to every part of him. Hence all the divine names are related to him; not a single name eludes him. So Adam emerged upon the form of the name Allāh, since it is this name which comprises all the divine names."³²

In this part of the interpretation it is evident that Ibn ʿArabī deals with the personal pronoun (ḍamīr) in the expression "his form" as referring to God. This is also evident in one place in the Fuṣūṣ where he says:

"Therefore he has said of the creation of Adam, who is the synthetic link of the attributes of the divine presence, which is the Essence, to the qualities and actions, 'God created Adam in his form.' His form being nothing other than the Divine presence."³³

This is the way in which Ibn ʿArabī deals with the personal pronoun in this tradition most of the time. Nevertheless, occasionally he deals with it as referring to Adam. He says in one place of the Futūḥāt:

"The prophet said, 'God created Adam in his form.' In our opinion the personal pronoun in this tradition can refer to Adam. In this way it would be possible to reply to the 'people of reflection' (ahl al-afkār). Nevertheless, the personal pronoun can refer to God, meaning that Adam is 'assuming the traits of (all) the divine names.'"³⁴

Another statement in the Futūḥāt confirms the latter opinion and explains what Ibn ʿArabī meant by saying, "In this way it would be possible to reply to the 'people of reflection'". He says in this statement:

"Knowledge is to conceptualise the object of knowledge (al-ʿilm taṣawwur al-maʿlūm). And it is an intrinsic attribute (ṣifa dhātiyya) of the knower.

Hence, the knower's knowledge is his form in which he created Adam, because Adam was created by Allāh in Allāh's form (as we are told in the ḥadīth). There will be no contradiction if we say that the personal pronoun (in the expression 'in his form') refers to Adam. In this case the form will mean Adam's form as it is conceptualised by God...But if a Muslim philosopher (had asked me about the meaning of this ḥadīth), I would have answered that the personal pronoun goes back to Adam. The meaning is that Adam did not pass through stages (atwār) of creation, as the sperm passes from being water to a human being, one creation after another. On the contrary, God created him as he became manifest, and he did not pass by stages, e.g., from infancy to youth to manhood to old age, nor did he pass from smallness of body to largeness, as does a child among Adam's progeny. This is the way in which such a questioner should be answered, since every questioner has to be given an answer that is appropriate for him."³⁵

Ibn ʿArabi's understanding of this tradition is based on his concept of "the unity of existence" (wahdat al-wujūd). This concept forms the foundation of his doctrine. According to it there is only one "ultimate reality in the whole of existence". This "ultimate reality" is one with regard to its essence (dhāt), multiple with regard to its names and attributes. However, the Divine Essence does not become multiple through the names and the attributes, because they cannot be considered separate from it. "Rather they are relationships, attributions, ascriptions, or correlations (nisab, idāfat)."³⁶ The universe is a reflection of the attributes, the attributes are a manifestation of the Divine Names and the Divine Names are ascriptions through which the Divine Essence is revealed. Ibn ʿArabi says in this connection:

"God is identical with being/existence. He is described as possessing attributes because the existent things have attributes. Then he reported that in respect of his own entity, he is identical with the attributes and members of the servant, for He said, 'I am his hearing.'³⁷ Thereby he attributed hearing to the entity of the existent thing which hears, while he ascribed it to himself. But there is no Existent Being save he. So it is he who hears, and he is the hearing. So also is the case with the other faculties and perceptions: They are nothing but he."³⁸

To support his concept of "the unity of existence" Ibn ʿArabi uses the tradition in which God speaks in the first person and says, "I was an unknown

treasure, and loved to be known, so I created the creatures, and made myself known to them. So, by me they knew me."³⁹ It has already been stated that the authenticity of this tradition cannot be proved through the established technique of ḥadīth criticism, and that Ibn ʿArabī was well aware of this fact, but he claimed that the authenticity of this tradition was confirmed through "unveiling" (kashf), "or vision of the prophet in the imaginal world". However, the above-mentioned tradition is not the only one that Ibn ʿArabī uses to support his concept of "the unity of existence". To support this concept he also quotes other traditions such as: 1. "God was and nothing was with him."⁴⁰ 2. "God was and nothing was before him."⁴¹ 3. "He was in a cloud, neither above which nor below which was any air."⁴² For those who accept the tradition, "Whoever sees me in sleep has indeed seen me." as an authentic one, and accept Ibn ʿArabī as a trustworthy scholar, Ibn ʿArabī's argument that the authenticity of the tradition, "I was an unknown treasure...." has been established through "unveiling" might be convincing.⁴³ Nevertheless, one must say that Ibn ʿArabī could have avoided much criticism by not using this tradition to support his concept that "there is only one ultimate reality in the whole of existence", in other words the unity of being. Enough support could have been provided by the other traditions which Ibn ʿArabī used for the same purpose. These traditions have already been traced back to the authentic collections.

In his interpretation of the tradition, "God created Adam in his form", Ibn ʿArabī also uses the traditions concerning God "which have come with words, along with their meanings, which apply to" human being, or to Adam in other words. He says in this connection:

"It is not possible to conceptualise this except through imagination (by this he is referring to his previously-mentioned statement in which he says that Adam's 'sensory form' is identical with his form as it is conceptualised by God). As for us and the people of our kind we can perceive this without conceptualisation. But since the term ṣūra (form) was mentioned in the ḥadīth, we understood that God meant that he created Adam upon Adam's

form as he conceptualises it, not as he perceives it without conceptualisation. So, by using this term (sūra) God gave heed to imagination (iḥṭabara Allāh fī hādhihi al-ḥibāra al-takhayyul). And if God attributes imagination to himself, what is one to think of everybody else? It is reported in the authentic reports from the prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) that Gabriel said to him, 'Virtue (al-iḥsān) is that you worship God as if you see him (ka annaka tarāhu).' The use of the preposition ka in this tradition indicates that by saying, 'As if you see him (ka annaka tarāhu)', Gabriel meant: imagine that you see him. (To imagine that we see God) we have in our hands only revealed reports concerning God's descent (nuzūl), witness (maḥiyya), two hands (al-yadayn), hand (al-yad), eye (al-ḥayn), eyes (al-aḥyun), foot (al-rijl), laughter (al-daḥik), and so forth, all of which the Real (al-Haqq) attributes to himself. This is the form of Adam, and in all these reports, he gives us its differentiated details. Then he brings it all together in the prophet's words, 'God created Adam in his form.'⁴⁴

To sum up I may say that Ibn ḤArabī meant to say that in reality it makes no difference if we say that the personal pronoun (hā') in the expression "Ḥalā sūratihī" (in his form) refers to God, or to Adam. As in Ibn ḤArabī's thought Adam's form is God's form. Because Adam's "sensory form" is identical with his form as it is conceptualised by God. And conceptualisation when attributed to God is nothing other than him. Because the attributes are manifestation of the Divine Names and the Divine Names are ascriptions through which the Divine Essence is revealed.

I should also mention that Ibn ḤArabī's opinion that the personal pronoun in "sūratihī" (his form) refers to Adam can be justified on grammatical grounds. In Arabic grammar the usage of a personal pronoun in a sentence refers to the person immediately preceding it.⁴⁵

Ibn ḤArabī said that the above-mentioned personal pronoun refers to Adam on purpose. His purpose was to make the tradition bear two plausible meanings. A simple one and a deep one. Accordingly, it would be possible for him to address every scholar concerning the meaning of this tradition to the best of the latter's intellectual abilities. The simple meaning is that God created Adam in Adam's form, meaning that "Adam did not pass through stages of creation...on the contrary God created him as he became manifest." The deep or indirect one is that God

created Adam upon Adam's form which is in fact identical with God's form. This is based on the reports concerning God, which have come with words, along with their meanings, which apply to human kind, or to Adam as referred to earlier.

To complete his theory about the relation between God and human kind, Ibn ʿArabī makes a link between three traditions and uses them in an extraordinary manner to systematise this theory. These traditions are: 1. "I was an unknown treasure and loved to be known, so I created the creatures and made myself known to them, so, by me they knew me."⁴⁶ 2. "God created Adam in his form." 3. "Three things have been made beloved to me in this world of yours: women, perfume and my solace was made to be in prayer."⁴⁷ He uses the first of these traditions to establish the opinion that love is the origin and the cause of everything in existence. Because God says that he created the whole creation because he "loved to be known." In love there have to be three elements: the loving, love and the beloved. But the ḥadīth tells us that "God was and nothing was with him." So, in this love relation the loving, love and the beloved are one. Ibn ʿArabī says in the Fuṣūṣ:

"Know, may God prosper you, that the (creative) command is essentially based on unevenness in which triplicity is implicit, since three is the first of the uneven numbers."⁴⁸

Ibn ʿArabī claims that if it was not for this triplicity the creation would not have come into existence. He built this theory on another one about numbers. This other theory is that three is the first number of the uneven ones. All the uneven numbers are derived from the number three, not from one, because one is not a number; it is the origin of numbers. By this Ibn ʿArabī meant to say that the stage of creation (multiplicity) was not next to the stage of oneness (aḥadiyya), when God was unknown. It was next to the stage of singularity (wāḥidiyya) when God loved to be known. In his works Ibn ʿArabī puts special emphasis on triplicity as being the foundation of creation and the main factor in existence. This triplicity, as we have seen, is not identical with the Trinity in Christianity. It is

"only a trinity of relative aspects, not of three persons."⁴⁹

The emphasis laid on triplicity as being the foundation of creation and the main factor in existence is well demonstrated in Ibn ʿArabi's understanding of the tradition, "God created Adam in his form." Earlier we have seen that Ibn ʿArabi claimed that the personal pronoun in this tradition can refer to Adam, meaning that God created Adam in the latter's form as it existed in the former's knowledge. So, there are three elements: The knower (God), knowledge and the known (Adam), but in reality these three elements are one. In Ibn ʿArabi's words: "Whatever is given form by a form-giver is identical with the form-giver", "The knower's knowledge is his form, in which he created Adam."⁵⁰

So, the first form in which God (the essence) appeared consists of three elements: the knower, knowledge and the known. In reality these three are one. As has been shown earlier, Ibn ʿArabi claims that this first form in which God appeared is the reality of Muḥammad. Accordingly, the reality of Muḥammad also consists of three elements, since it is the first form of existence, because the prophet said, "I was a prophet when Adam was still between the water and the clay." Ibn ʿArabi goes on to assert the importance of love as being the origin of existence, and of triplicity as being the main factor without which the world would not have come into existence. For this purpose he uses the tradition, "Three things have been made beloved to me in this world of yours: Women, perfume and my solace was made to be in prayer."⁵¹ He makes use of the number three, mentioned in this tradition, to confirm that triplicity is a main factor in love, and subsequently, in creation, because if it was not for love, God would not have created the creation, i.e. he created the world because he loved to be known. Ibn ʿArabi also makes use of the preceding tradition to argue that the first reality to exist in this world, the reality of Muḥammad, consists of three elements. He says in this connection:

"Since, then, his reality was marked by primal singularity and his makeup

by triplicity, he said concerning love, which is the origin of all existent being, 'three things have been made beloved to me in this world of yours', because of the triplicity inherent in him."⁵²

Using the same tradition, Ibn ʿArabī proceeds to explain the relation between God, man and woman in a unique way. The emphasis laid on triplicity as a main factor in this relation should not be neglected. He says that women were given priority in this tradition because the woman is originally part of the man. So man's knowledge of himself is incomplete unless he knows the woman, and his knowledge of himself comes first because it is essential for knowing his Lord. In other words, one cannot have knowledge of his Lord unless he knows himself, because one's knowledge of his Lord is a result of his knowledge of himself. This is the explanation which Ibn ʿArabī gives for women being given priority over ritual prayers in the above-mentioned tradition. That is because in Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine to love women is to know one's self, and consequently to know one's Lord, while to pray is to communicate with the Lord.

Ibn ʿArabī's opinion that the woman is originally part of the man is based on the tradition which is reported on the authority of Abū Hurayra in Bukhārī's Ṣaḥīḥ and other collections of ḥadīth. This tradition says, "I advise you to take care of women, for they are created from a rib...."⁵³ The commentators of ḥadīth, among them some of the prophet's companions, are reported to have said that this tradition refers to the creation of Eve (Ḥawwā'). They say that she was created from Adam's shorter left rib while the latter was asleep.⁵⁴ However, Ibn ʿArabī does not quote the tradition directly, but it is clear that he refers to it. In contrast with that, however, he clearly states that his opinion, that the only right way to know the Lord is through knowing ourselves, is based on the saying, "He who knows himself knows his Lord." When quoting this saying Ibn ʿArabī usually says, "He (may God grant him salvation) said, 'He who knows himself knows his Lord'".⁵⁵ In Ibn ʿArabī's use this expression is not limited to the prophet: he uses it with all the members of the prophet's family. However, in a statement in the Fuṣūṣ he explicitly attributes this saying to the prophet where he says, "The prophet said,

'He who knows himself...', linking together knowledge of God and knowledge of the self."⁵⁶ The preceding Chapter has made it clear that it is more likely that this is a saying of ʿAlī Ibn Abī Ṭālib, and it is common among Muslims to use the sayings of the prophet's companions to support religious views.⁵⁷

It is worthy of note that the idea of knowing God through knowing one's self can be supported by verses from the Qur'ān. For example the Qur'ān says, "In the earth are signs for those having sure faith; and in your selves; what, do you not see?"⁵⁸

Earlier I have discussed Ibn ʿArabi's theory of "the unity of existence", according to which all the objects of the universe are different forms of the divine self-disclosure. This theory makes it a truism to say that one cannot know God "without formal support"⁵⁹ (lā yushāhad al-ḥaqq mujarradan ʿan al-mawād), and that one cannot know God unless he knows himself. Not only does Ibn ʿArabi support this opinion but he goes further than that and criticises those who rejected it. Among them is the famous Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, with reference to whom Ibn ʿArabi wrote as follows:

"He (may God grant him salvation) said, 'He who knows himself knows his Lord', and he is the one who knows God best. Certain scholars, among them Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, have claimed that God can be known without any reference to the created Cosmos, but this is mistaken. It is true that a primordial eternal essence can be known, but it cannot be known as a divinity unless knowledge of that to which it can be related is assumed, for it is the dependent who confirms the independence of the independent...."⁶⁰

In Ibn ʿArabi's opinion to know God through one's knowledge of himself is more perfect than knowing God through knowledge of the other objects of the universe. The explanation of this is cited by Toshihiko Izutsu as follows:

"All the exterior things surrounding us are for us things which we look at only from outside. We cannot penetrate into there interior and experience ^{their} from inside the divine life pulsating within them. Only into the interior of ourselves are we able to penetrate by our self-consciousness and experience from inside the divine activity of self-manifestation which is going on

there."⁶¹

Commenting on the tradition, "Three things have been made beloved to me...", Ibn ʿArabi goes further to claim that man's love for woman is similar to God's love for man. They are similar because the beloved is in both cases nothing else than the lover, and because the beloved is in both cases created in the lover's form. The explanation of this is that Adam's spirit was created when God breathed into him of his spirit,⁶² so the former is nothing else than the latter. And Eve was created from Adam's rib, so, she is nothing other than he. Adam is created in God's form and Eve is created in Adam's form. In fact a deep examination of Ibn ʿArabi's understanding of the prophetic saying that women have been made beloved to him, and subsequently the relation between God, man and woman as Ibn ʿArabi draws it, shows us that this relation is carefully orientated to match his theory of "the unity of existence". Three figures are involved in this love relation: God, man and woman, but they are in fact one entity. God's love and yearning for man⁶³ is nothing else than the former's love for himself, because the latter is only a form of the former. The same applies to man's love and yearning for woman. In a similar way woman yearns for man because the latter is the origin of the former, and the same applies to man's yearning for God. Ibn ʿArabi puts all this in the following statement:

"Then God drew forth from him a being in his own (form), called woman, and because she appears in his own (form), the man feels a deep longing for her, as something yearns for itself, while she feels longing for him as one longs for that place to which one belongs. Thus, women were made beloved to him, for God loves that which he has created in his own (form)...From that stemmed the affinity (between God and man), and the (divine) image is the greatest, most glorious and perfect (example of) affinity. That is because it is a syzygy that polarises the being of the Reality, just as woman, by her coming into being, polarises humanity, making of it a syzygy. Thus we have a triad, God, man, and woman, the man yearning for his Lord who is his origin, as woman yearns for man. His Lord made women dear to him, just as God loves that which is in his own (form). Love arises only for that from which one has one's being, so that man loves that from which he has his being, which is the Reality, which is

why he says, 'were made beloved to me,' and not 'I love' directly from himself. His love is for his Lord in whose (form) he is, this being so even as regards his love for his wife, since he loves her through God's love for him, after the divine manner."⁶⁴

Earlier I have discussed Ibn ʿArabi's theory that God cannot be seen or known without "formal support", and that to know God through knowing one's self is more perfect than knowing him through knowledge of the other objects of the universe. When man seeks to know himself through a woman he is assuming a divine trait, because he is following the course of his Lord who created Adam in his form so that he can see himself in him. Since the woman is originally part of the man, and she is created in his form, in Ibn ʿArabi's doctrine it follows that man's knowledge of himself and consequently of his Lord is most perfect when man is united with woman, because only then man's knowledge of himself is perfect. Ibn ʿArabi puts this as follows:

"When man contemplates the Reality in woman he beholds (him) in a passive aspect, while when he contemplates him in himself, as being that from which woman is manifest, he beholds him in an active aspect. When, however, he contemplates him in himself, without any regard to what has come from him, he beholds him as passive to himself directly. However, his contemplation of the Reality in woman is the most complete and perfect, because in this way he contemplates the Reality in both an active and a passive mode, while by contemplating the Reality only in himself, he beholds him in a passive mode particularly. Because of this the prophet loved women by reason of (the possibility of) perfect contemplation of the Reality in them. Contemplation of the Reality without formal support is not possible, since God, in his essence, is far beyond all need of the cosmos. Since, therefore, some form of support is necessary, the best and most perfect kind is the contemplation of God in women. The greatest union is that between man and woman, corresponding as it does to the turning of God toward the one he has created in his own (form), to make him his vicegerent, so that he might behold himself in him."⁶⁵

In both the Fut and the Fus Ibn ʿArabi confirms that love and sexual relation between man and woman are divine if the former loves the latter in the way the prophet Muḥammad loved women. That is to say when a man loves or has a sexual relation with a woman, in order to know his Lord, knowing that this is

the only perfect way to perceive this knowledge, this love relation is divine and whoever experiences it is a perfect man. He says in the Fus:

"Whoever loves women in this way (the way of the prophet) loves with a divine love, while he whose love for them is limited to natural lust lacks all (true) knowledge of that desire. For such a one she is mere form, devoid of spirit, and even though that form be indeed imbued with spirit, it is absent for one who approaches his wife or some other woman solely to have his pleasure of her, without realising whose the pleasure (really) is. Thus, he does not know himself (truly), just as a stranger does not know him until he reveals his identity to him. As they say,

They are right in supposing that I am in love,

Only they know not with whom I am in love.

Such a man is (really) in love with pleasure itself and, in consequence, loves its repository, which is woman, the real truth and meaning of the act being lost on him. If he knew the truth, he would know whom it is he is enjoying and who it is who is the enjoyer; then he would be perfected."⁶⁶

A similar statement is found in the Fut.⁶⁷

It is most probably these last two statements and the like that lead some Muslim scholars to accuse Ibn ʿArabi of materialism (māddiyya) and freethinking (ibāhiyya). For example, ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn ʿAbd al-Salām is reported to have said the following about Ibn ʿArabi:

"This shaykh (Ibn ʿArabi) is evil and a liar: he believes that the universe is eternal, and does not declare sexual relation with a woman, whoever she may be, to be unlawful (lā yuharrimu farjan)."⁶⁸

However, there are conflicting reports concerning Ibn ʿAbd al-Salām's opinion on Ibn ʿArabi. In another report it is said that once in the class-room of ʿIzz al-Dīn a man called Ibn ʿArabi a zindīq (one who hides infidelity and professes faith). ʿIzz al-Dīn is reported to have kept silent as if he agreed with the man. Later, however, Ibn ʿAbd al-Salām himself is reported to have said that Ibn ʿArabi was "the most eminent" sage of his time. He is also reported to have said that he did not object to the claim that Ibn ʿArabi is a zindīq because that claim was made during an assembly of jurists.⁶⁹

ʿAffīfī, who took the task of analysing Ibn ʿArabi's system, was aware of

the danger that these statements of Ibn ʿArabi might bring. ʿAffī is of the opinion that these statements and the like should be considered as mystical allusions. He thinks that the word "woman" (al-mar'a) is used in these statements to stand for the beloved (al-mahbūb) in general, and that the beloved to whom Ibn ʿArabi pointed by the word "woman" in these statements is the Real (al-haqq) or Allāh.⁷⁰ I respect ʿAffī's opinion in this connection, without, however, being in total agreement with him. It seems to me that Ibn ʿArabi meant what he said about the relation between man and woman. However, it cannot be said that Ibn ʿArabi approved of relation between man and woman outside the rules of the Shariʿa (Islamic law), because he frequently confirms that one should confine himself/herself to the rules of the Shariʿa. There are countless examples of statements which bear witness to this in Ibn ʿArabi's works.⁷¹

This seems a suitable point at which to pause and consider Ibn ʿArabi's concept that the whole universe is living (ḥayy) and speaking (nātiq). This is based on his theory of "the unity of existence", according to which there is only one Reality and the whole universe is but a reflection of this Reality. To give credit to this concept he quotes the prophetic tradition, "The ruler is the shadow of Allāh on earth".⁷² Since every created thing is but a reflection of God, and God is living and speaking -The Living, al-ḥayy, and The Speaking, al-mutakallim are among the ninety-nine names of Allāh- every created thing in the universe has to be living and speaking. To support this concept he quotes the prophetic tradition, the genuineness of which is acknowledged by al-Bayhaqī. In this tradition Abū Dharr, the prophet's companion, is reported to have said that he heard seven (or nine) stones glorifying God when they were held by the prophet, Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān respectively.⁷³ On the ground of this report Ibn ʿArabi draws the conclusion that every thing in the universe is living and speaking, even though we are usually not capable of recognising and understanding this fact. It is significant that in Ibn ʿArabi's opinion the miracle which is referred to in this tradition does not lie in the stones' glorification of God. This is because every created thing

glorifies God. The Qur'ān says, "There is not a thing but celebrates his praise; and yet ye understand not how they declare his glory" (the Qur'ān 17:44). The miracle which is referred to in this tradition, says Ibn ʿArabī, is in the hearing of this glorification by those who were present, which does not happen usually.⁷⁴

3.3. The Figure of Muḥammad

The figure of Muḥammad is the main pivot on which Ibn ʿArabī's system depends. To investigate Ibn ʿArabī's theory about this figure, first of all one has to bear in mind that there are two different usages of it in his system. First, the use of the term Muḥammad to signify Muḥammad the prophet or "the form of Muḥammad". Secondly, the use of the term as being identical with: the Reality of Realities, the Logos, the First Intellect, the Universal Reason and the Perfect Man.⁷⁵

Ibn ʿArabī's second usage of the term, or his theory of the reality of Muḥammad is based to a considerable degree on his understanding of some of the prophetic traditions. In the following his understanding of these traditions will be considered.

The prophet is reported to have said, "I was a prophet when Adam was still between the water and the clay."⁷⁶ Ibn ʿArabī quotes this tradition frequently to prove that Muḥammad has pre-existed as a reality before every thing and that his existence is eternal. He says in the Fuṣūṣ:

"He is the wisdom of singularity because he is the most perfect creation of this humankind, for which reason the whole affair (of creation) begins and ends with him. He was a prophet when Adam was still between the water and the clay."⁷⁷

In the Futūḥāt he says:

"And you (God) have made him (Muḥammad) the noble principle when Adam was still between the water and the clay."⁷⁸

ʿAffīfī claims that Ṣūfīs in general use this tradition to argue for the pre-

existence and eternity of Muḥammad. Ghazālī, however, does not accept this interpretation for this tradition. To him it only means that "Muḥammad was ordained or predestined from eternity to be a prophet."⁷⁹

The opinions of some ḥadīth scholars on this tradition have already been discussed. According to them, the authenticity of this tradition cannot be proved through the established methods of ḥadīth criticism. The ḥadīth is not found in these words in any of the collections that Muslims accept as containing authentic ones. The only tradition with a text that matches that of this one is "I was a prophet when Adam was still between the spirit and the body." So far I could not trace this narration in any of Ibn ʿArabī's works. It cannot be assumed that someone with Ibn ʿArabī's knowledge of ḥadīth was not aware of it. When we consider its meaning we find that the prophet is claimed to have stated that he was a prophet when Adam was in a stage between the spirit and the body. Accordingly, it may be argued that the existence of Adam's spirit preceded the existence of the prophet.⁸⁰ And it seems that this is the reason for which Ibn ʿArabī avoided using this version. This suggestion does not mean that I am ruling out the possibility that Ibn ʿArabī has another reason for avoiding this narration, i.e. the authenticity of this version was disapproved in his opinion by means of "unveiling", while the authenticity of the other was approved by the same means.⁸¹ However, there is another tradition which could serve as a proof for the opinion of Ibn ʿArabī and the Ṣūfīs in general on this matter. This tradition has already been referred to in Chap.2. It is narrated in both the Musnad of Ibn Ḥanbal, and al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn of al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī (d.405/1014). Commenting on this tradition's isnād Ḥākim states, "This tradition has a genuine chain of transmitters (ḥādhā ḥadīth ṣaḥīḥ al-isnād)."⁸² A translation of this tradition as a whole compared to one of Ibn ʿArabī's statements shows the similarity between the meaning of this tradition and Ibn ʿArabī's opinion on this matter. Ḥākim relates the following:

It is reported on the authority of al-ʿArbād b. Sāriya (a prophet's companion)

that he heard the prophet saying, "I was inscribed in God's presence as the seal of the prophets when Adam was prone in his clay. I shall inform you about the beginning of my career: It was the petition of Abraham, the good tidings by Jesus, and the vision my mother saw when she gave birth to me and a light issued to her from which the castles of Syria shone for her."⁸³

Ibn ʿArabī states the following:

"The spirit of Muḥammad (Allāh's prayers and peace be upon him) accompanied the spirit of every prophet and messenger. It is from this pure spirit (Muḥammad's spirit) that the latter received their inspiration. It (Muḥammad's spirit) inspired them with revelations and knowledge when they were sent as messengers and were acting as legislative power. It provided them with knowledge in the same manner in which Muḥammad provided his companions, for example ʿAlī and Muḥadh, with knowledge when he and they existed on Earth."⁸⁴

In Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine Muḥammad is the master of mankind including all the prophets and Friends of God. In his works he often quotes the traditions: "I will be the master of mankind on the Day of Resurrection."⁸⁵ And "I am the master of mankind (walad Ādam), I say this without boasting."⁸⁶ From these traditions and the above-mentioned one, he draws the conclusion that "all the prophets, from Adam to the last one, are deputies of Muḥammad."⁸⁷ The same applies to the Friends. So, Muḥammad is the source of all knowledge, including that of Muḥammadan Friends, whose knowledge is inherited from another prophet, for example Jesus or Moses, because these Muḥammadan Friends (Friends of God) cannot inherit this knowledge except through the spirit of Muḥammad. Ibn ʿArabī claims that this is the meaning of the prophetic saying, "The learned of this community are equal to the prophets of the children of Israel."⁸⁸ That is to say, they are equal in the sense that they both receive their knowledge from the same source, which is Muḥammad.⁸⁹ Muḥammad is "the indwelling revealer of God, the transmitter of all divine knowledge to all who possess it."⁹⁰

As in Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine the reality of Muḥammad is the first thing to exist, Muḥammad is also identical with the First Intellect, about which the

tradition, that Ibn ʿArabi often quotes, says, "The first thing that God created was the intellect."⁹¹ The First Intellect in Ibn ʿArabi's words is al-barzakh "(the intermediary stage) between the Godhead and the phenomenal world - a link between the eternal and the temporal, the necessary and the contingent, the real and the phenomenal, the active and the passive and so on."⁹² In the Second Chapter I referred to Ibn Taymiyya's opinion regarding the isnād of the preceding tradition. He considered it a fabricated one. However, according to ʿIraqi this tradition is reported via two different channels, both of which are weak. According to the established methods of the criticism of ḥadīth when a weak tradition is reported via more than one channel it rises from the category of weak traditions to the category of fair ones (ḥasan).⁹³

The human aspect of the figure of Muḥammad is identified in Ibn ʿArabi's doctrine with the Perfect Man (al-insān al-kāmil), since his reality is the first thing to be created. God created the universe because he "loved to be known." And it is only through man, or in fact the Perfect Man or the reality of Muḥammad that God could be known. As ʿAffī puts it, "Man is the only being in whom this principle (God) is manifested in so high a degree that he deserves to be called the 'vicegerent of God' (al-khalīfa) and the 'image' of God (al-ṣūra)⁹⁴ and the Microcosm (al-kawn al-jāmiʿ) or the mirror which reflects all the perfections and attributes of God - or even God himself."⁹⁵ Ibn ʿArabi explains all this in the following statement:

"The Reality wanted to see the essences of his most beautiful names or, to put it another way, to see his own Essence, in an all-inclusive object encompassing the whole (divine) command, which, qualified by existence, would reveal to him his own mystery.⁹⁶ For the seeing of a thing, itself by itself,⁹⁷ is not the same as its seeing itself in another, as it were in a mirror; for it appears to itself in a form that is invested by the location of the vision by that which would only appear to it given the existence of the location and its (the location's) self-disclosure to it."⁹⁸

So the Perfect Man is perfect not necessarily in an ethical manner "but as encompassing all of God's attributes."⁹⁹ The perfect man is a category which

includes all the prophets and Friends of God. Since the Perfect Man is the only "all-inclusive object encompassing the whole (divine) command", he is the only object through which the aim of creation is attained. That is to say, it is only through the Perfect Man that God can be known. Therefor, Ibn ʿArabī considers the Perfect Man the cause of creation. He goes further to claim that if the cause (the Perfect Man) were to disappear, the whole universe would cease to exist. He says in the Fuṣūṣ:

"Do you not see that when he shall cease to be present in it and when the seal (on the treasury) of the lower world is broken, none of what the Reality preserved will endure and all of it will depart."¹⁰⁰

In another place of the Fuṣūṣ he tells us that "the all-inclusive object encompassing the whole (divine) command" is Muḥammad the prophet. He says:

"His is the wisdom of singularity because he is the most perfect creation of this mankind, for which the whole affair (of creation) begins and ends with him. He was a prophet when Adam was still between the water and the clay and he is, by his elemental makeup, the seal of the prophets, first of the three singular ones, since all other singulars derive from it. He was the clearest of evidence for his Lord, having been given the totality of the divine words, which are those things named by Adam."¹⁰¹

By saying, "having been given the totality of the divine words" he is referring to the tradition, "I was given the all-comprehensive words."¹⁰² This tradition is only one among many that Ibn ʿArabī uses to assert the all-inclusiveness of Muḥammad's message. He says in the Futūḥāt:

"When God taught Adam the names (Qur'ān 2:30), he was in the station second to the station of Muḥammad, since Muḥammad had already come to know the all-comprehensive words, and all the names are words."¹⁰³

In another place he says:

"Muḥammad was the greatest locus of divine self-disclosure, and thereby he came to know 'the knowledge of the ancients and the later folk.' Among those of old was Adam, who had knowledge of the names. Muḥammad was given the all-comprehensive words, and the words of God are never exhausted."¹⁰⁴

In a third place he says:

"The messenger of God said, 'I will be the master of mankind on the Day of Resurrection.' The reason of this is his perfection. He said, 'Were Moses alive, he would find it impossible not to follow me.' Because of the all-inclusiveness of the prophet's messengerhood and the all-embracingness of his law; for he was singled out for things never given to any prophet before him, and no prophet was ever singled out for anything that Muḥammad did not possess, since he was given the all-comprehensive words. He said, 'I was a prophet when Adam was between clay and water,' while every other prophet was only a prophet during the state of his prophethood and the time of his messengerhood."¹⁰⁵

It is surprising that in spite of all the knowledge and attributes that he ascribes to Muḥammad the prophet, Ibn ʿArabi's interpretation of some traditions shows that he does not believe in his infallibility, though he is of the opinion that the reality of Muḥammad is infallible. The following is an example which demonstrates that Ibn ʿArabi did not believe in the infallibility of the prophet Muḥammad:

Commenting on the tradition, "You are more knowledgeable in the best interests of this world of yours,"¹⁰⁶ Ibn ʿArabi says:

"Though the created thing's knowledge has a perfect excellence whose rank is not unknown, nothing bestows felicity through nearness to God except faith. Hence the light of faith in the created thing is more excellent than the light of knowledge not accompanied by faith. But when faith is actualised along with knowledge, the light of that knowledge, born from the light of faith, is higher. Through it the person of faith who has knowledge (al-mu'min al-ʿālim) surpasses the person of faith who does not have knowledge. For 'God raises up...those' of the faithful 'who have been given knowledge in degrees' (58:11) over those of the faithful who have not been given knowledge. He means here knowledge of God, for God's messenger said to his companions, 'You are more knowledgeable in the best interests of this world of yours.'"¹⁰⁷

In connection with the same tradition he says in the Fuṣūṣ:

"Consider, then, the perfection of these two men in knowledge in their maintaining of the divine proprieties, as also al-Khadir's impartiality in recognising Moses' rank when he said, 'I have knowledge from God that you do not have, just as you have knowledge from God that I do not possess.'

This concession to Moses' knowledge was by way of alleviating the irritation he caused him by saying, 'How can you have patience with that of which you have no experience?', while knowing the loftiness of his apostolic rank, which he himself did not enjoy. This is relevant to the community of Muḥammad in the story of the pollination of the palm trees. Muḥammad said to his companions, 'You are more knowledgeable in the best interests of this world of yours,' although there is no doubt that knowledge of a thing is better than ignorance of it. God, therefore, extols himself as being knowledgeable about all things. Thus the prophet recognised that his companions were more knowledgeable about the things of this world, of which he had no experience and direct contact, and Muḥammad had no time for such knowledge, being concerned with more important matters."¹⁰⁸

Contrary to Ibn ʿArabī's understanding of this tradition others have the following to say:

First: when the people mentioned in this tradition abandoned "the pollination of the palm trees", they were acting according to their own understanding of the prophet's statement. The prophet's statement was, "If you had let the trees be, they would have been good (law taraktumūhu la ṣaluh)."¹⁰⁹ They understood that the prophet meant that they should stop pollinating the other palm trees. The prophet used in his statement the conditional particle "law" (if). In the grammar of the Arabic language the use of law imports prevention of the correlative, due to the prevention of the condition (law ḥarf imtināʿ li imtināʿ). Every one who hears "If you had let the trees be", "unhesitatingly understands the non-occurrence of the act; it is right for you to follow it up with the particle of emendation literally or ideally prefixed to the verb of the condition negated, as in...if he had come to me, I should have honoured him; but he did not come."¹⁰⁹

This means that the prophet was talking about the trees that they had already pollinated and not the others. There is nothing in the ḥadīth to suggest that the prophet was giving them advice to act in accordance with in the future. Therefore, this tradition cannot be used to disprove the infallibility of the prophet Muḥammad.

Secondly: from the prophet's statement, "You are more knowledgeable in the best interests of this world of yours (antum adrā bi shuʿūn dunyākum)," Ibn

ʿArabi understood that the prophet was comparing his knowledge about the things of this world to that of this group of people. Others understood that in this statement the prophet was comparing these people's worldly knowledge with their religious knowledge. Thus it cannot be said that the prophet meant that these people were more knowledgeable than him about this world.

ʿAffifi, who analysed Ibn ʿArabi's theory about the figure of Muḥammad, or the Logos, suggests that he was influenced by the following:

1. al-Ḥallāj (d.309/922), who says, "Muḥammad's existence was prior even to non-existence...he was known before substances and accidents, and before the realities of 'before' and 'after' (i.e. relations). He comes from a 'tribe' which is neither eastern nor western."¹¹⁰ He also states that Muḥammad is the "undying light" and that he is the source from which all the prophets and the Ṣūfīs receive their knowledge.¹¹¹
2. Ghazālī, who developed Ḥallāj's theory in a more philosophical way.¹¹²
3. Stoics, Philo and Neoplatonists, who influenced the "metaphysical and the human aspects" of this theory.¹¹³
4. The Ismāʿīlīs, who believe in the "infallible Imām (leader) who is for ever incarnating himself in different forms."¹¹⁴ But Ibn ʿArabi differs from them in that he does not believe that the external leader, Muḥammad the prophet, is infallible. The similarity between the Ismāʿīlīs' theory of the infallible Imām and Ibn ʿArabi's theory of the reality of Muḥammad is well demonstrated in the latter's interpretation of the tradition, "(the division of) Time has turned to its original form when God created the world."¹¹⁵ He says that this tradition means that time goes in a circle, the starting-point of which is the reality of Muḥammad, beside which nothing existed. In the first round of this circle Muḥammad was assuming the divine name al-bāṭin ("the non-manifest"). That is to say, he appeared in different forms, i.e. Abraham, Moses, Jesus and all the other prophets and messengers. So, the divine laws and messages of this round were externally attributed to these prophets and messengers, while internally and in reality they

belong to Muḥammad. Then another round started: in it Muḥammad was assuming the divine name al-zāhir ("the manifest"). That is to say Muḥammad himself became manifest in his own entity in this world as a prophet. So, the reality became manifest, and the laws were attributed to their real source, Muḥammad, who was the starting-point of the circle (the world).¹¹⁶

5. The philosophy underlying the Trinity in Christianity. In Christianity Christ, the "word", "is the glory of the Father: in it and by means of it, he displays, in time, all the riches which God has eternally put within him...he is the Revealer and the Revealed, the Guide, etc., etc."¹¹⁷ This is almost identical with Ibn ʿArabī's philosophy with regard to the relation of the reality of Muḥammad to God and the universe.¹¹⁸

ʿAffī's analysis might seem, then, to be indisputably and exclusively correct, were it not for a recent, detailed and well-documented study by Franz Rosenthal. Taking the findings of this study into consideration, it is not possible to take the assumption that Ibn ʿArabī was influenced by certain philosophical schools for granted. Rosenthal argues that there is no clear evidence to prove that Ibn ʿArabī read certain philosophical works, for example the Liber de causis and the Theology of Aristotle. He adds that the fact that Ibn ʿArabī used expressions, such as "the knower" and "the known", which are found in these does not necessarily leads to the assumption that he actually read them, as these expressions were by Ibn ʿArabī's time in common use in all scholarly circles. Moreover, Rosenthal provides strong evidence which shows that on the rare occasions when Ibn ʿArabī explicitly states that he is quoting from a philosophical work, there is either ambiguity with regard to the philosophical source which Ibn ʿArabī claims that he is quoting from, or incorrectness with regard to the quoted information.¹¹⁹

3.4. Transcendence and anthropomorphism ("Tanzīh and Tashbīh")

"Tanzīh and tashbīh" is a subject that has caused an endless discussion in Muslim scholarly circles. This is due to the fact that on the one hand, there are

many Qur'ānic verses and prophetic traditions that imply tanzīh, and on the other hand there are many Qur'ānic verses and prophetic traditions that imply tashbīh. Before we proceed to discuss Ibn ʿArabī's views on this subject we may refer to Izutsu's explanation of the meanings of the two terms. Izutsu says:

"Tanzīh (from the verb nazzaha meaning literally 'to keep something away from anything contaminating, anything impure') is used in theology in the sense of 'declaring__or considering God absolutely free from all imperfections'. And by 'imperfections' is meant in this context all qualities that resemble those of creatures even in the slightest degree.

Tanzīh in this sense is an assertion of God's essential and absolute transcendence with any created thing, his being above all creaturely attributes. It is, in short, an assertion of divine transcendence...In contrast to this, tashbīh (from the verb shabbaha meaning 'to make or consider something similar to some other thing') means in theology 'to liken God to created things'. More concretely, it is a theological assertion posited by those who, on the basis of the Qur'ānic (and prophetic) expressions suggesting that 'God has hands, feet, etc.', attribute corporeal and human properties to God."¹²⁰

In Ibn ʿArabī's works there are many examples of traditions that imply tashbīh.¹²¹ The nature and scope of this work will not allow me to discuss all of Ibn ʿArabī's interpretation of these traditions. Thus only a summary of his views on them with reference to tanzīh and tashbīh will be given.

From among the reports which are usually used to support tanzīh, Ibn ʿArabī chooses the most distinguished one to be the centre of his discussion. This is the Qur'ānic verse, "There is nothing like unto him, and he is the hearing, the seeing."¹²²

Muslim theologians have three attitudes towards the reports that imply tashbīh: First, those who accepted these reports, but believed that they should be interpreted away, in accordance with the principle of tanzīh. Secondly, those who accepted these reports and used them to support their doctrine, which is pure tashbīh. These, however, are a minority. Thirdly, those who accepted these reports, and believed them to be true, but believed that one should not ask how (kayf) they are true, because it is only God who knows the answer to this question.

To Ibn ʿArabi the first category of theologians, who adopted tanzīh, and the second, who adopted tashbīh, are both mistaken and one-sided in their knowledge about God.

In Ibn ʿArabi's opinion, those who adopted only tanzīh are either ignorant or ill-mannered towards God and his messengers. They are ignorant because they have taken into consideration only those reports which speak about tanzīh, and ignored those that speak about tashbīh, and in this way they have limited God when they should not. They are ill-mannered towards God and his messengers because they have indirectly accused both of lying. Ibn ʿArabi explains this in the following statement:

"For those who (truly) know the divine realities, the doctrine of transcendence imposes a restriction and a limitation (on the Reality), for he who asserts that God is (purely) transcendent is either a fool or a rogue, even if he be a professed believer. For, if he maintains that God is (purely) transcendent and excludes all other considerations, he acts mischievously and misrepresents the Reality and all the apostles, albeit unwittingly. He imagines that he has hit on the truth, while he has (completely) missed the mark, being like those who believe in part and deny in part.¹²³

It is known that when the Scriptures speak of the Reality they speak in a way that yields to the generality of men the immediately apparent meaning. The elite, on the other hand, understand all the meanings inherent in that utterance, in whatever terms they are expressed.

The truth is that the Reality is manifest in every created being and in every concept, while he is (at the same time) hidden from all understanding, except for one who holds that the cosmos is his form and his identity. This is the Name, the Manifest, while he is also unmanifested Spirit, the Unmanifest. In this sense he is, in relation to the manifested forms of the cosmos, the Spirit that determines those forms.

In any definition of man, his inner and outer aspects are both to be considered, as is the case with all objects of definition. As for the Reality, he may be defined by every definition, for the forms of the cosmos are limitless, nor can the definition of every form be known, except insofar as the forms are implicit in the (definition) of the cosmos.

Thus a (true) definition of the Reality is impossible, for such a definition would depend on the ability to (fully) define every form in the cosmos, which is impossible. Therefore, a (complete) definition of the Reality is impossible."¹²⁴

Ibn ʿArabi's opinion that one who limits himself to the doctrine of tanzīh

and rejects tashbīh, is in fact a mushabbih, is best explained by al-Qāshānī (d.730/1330) who says in this connection:

"Tanzīh is distinguishing the absolute from all contingent and physical things, that is, from all material things that do not allow of tanzīh. But everything that is distinguished from some other thing can only be distinguished from it through an attribute which is incompatible with the attribute of the latter. Thus such a thing (i.e., anything that is distinguished from others) must necessarily be determined by an attribute and delimited by a limitation. All tanzīh is in this sense delimitation."¹²⁵

Those who adopted the doctrine of tashbīh only, are also mistaken in Ibn ʿArabi's opinion. They are mistaken because they have limited God who is beyond all limits. Consequently, they have failed to know him.¹²⁶

The third category of theologians, who accepted the reports that imply tashbīh, and believed everything that they attribute to God to be true, but said that one should not ask how they are true, are praised by Ibn ʿArabi. Nevertheless, he believes that they failed to perceive the real knowledge inherent in these reports. The only people who are capable of perceiving this knowledge are the gnostics, says Ibn ʿArabi.¹²⁷

In Ibn ʿArabi's doctrine the most perfect attitude towards tanzīh and tashbīh is to combine the two of them. He argues that it is the only way through which the various reports concerning this subject can be brought together. In his opinion tanzīh is appropriate to the hidden aspect of the Reality, or the Essence that cannot be perceived, while tashbīh is appropriate to the divine self-disclosure that can be perceived. And he claims that it is for this reason, i.e., tanzīh and tashbīh cannot be separated, that the prophet said, "My Lord, increase my bewilderment in thee."¹²⁸ To support his opinion that Islam combines tanzīh and tashbīh Ibn ʿArabi quotes the Qur'ānic verse, "There is nothing like unto him." Although the verse is usually used to imply tanzīh, he argues that it serves as an argument to support the two aspects, namely tanzīh and tashbīh. His argument is presented as follows:

"God says, 'there is (nothing) like unto him', asserting his transcendence, and he says, 'he is the hearing, the seeing', implying comparison. On the other hand, there are implicit in the first quotation comparison (albeit negative) and duality (in the word 'like'), and in the second quotation transcendence and isolation are implicit (he alone being named)...(so) the quotation 'there is nothing like unto him' combines the two aspects...in (this) verse ... anthropomorphism is at once implied and denied. Because of this Muḥammad said that he had been granted (knowledge of God) integrating all his aspects."¹²⁹

Ibn ʿArabī gives a further explanation of the preceding argument in Fut and Fus. Izutsu analysis Ibn ʿArabī's explanation as follows:

"The verse grammatically allows of two different interpretations, the pivotal point being the second term ka-mithli-hi, which literally is a complex of three words: ka (like), mithli (similar to), and hi (him).

The first of these three words, ka (like), can syntactically be interpreted as either (1) expletive, i.e., having no particular meaning of its own in the combination with mithli which itself connotes anthropomorphism or equality, or (2) non-expletive, i.e., keeping its own independent meaning even in such a combination.

If we choose (1), the first half of the verse would mean, 'there is nothing like him' with an additional emphasis on the non-existence of anything similar to him. It is, in other words, the most emphatic declaration of tanzīh. And in this case, the second half of the verse: 'and he is the hearing, the seeing' is to be understood as a statement of tashbīh, because 'hearing' and 'seeing' are pre-eminently human properties. Thus the whole verse would amount to a combination of tanzīh and tashbīh.

If we choose the second alternative, the first half of the verse would mean the same thing as laysa mithla-mithli-hi shay' meaning 'there is nothing like anything similar to him'. Here something 'similar to him' is first mentally posited, then the existence of anything similar to that (which is similar to him) is categorically denied. since something similar to him is established at the outset, it is a declaration of tashbīh. And in this case, the second half of the verse must be interpreted as a declaration of tanzīh. This interpretation is based on the observation that the sentence structure - with the pronominal subject, huwa (he) put at the head of the sentence, and the following epithets, samīʿ (hearing) and baṣīr (seeing) being determined by the article, al- (the) - implies that he is the only samīʿ and the only baṣīr in the whole world of being. Thus, here again we get a combination of tanzīh and tashbīh."¹³⁰

To sum up one may quote the following verses of Ibn ʿArabī, in which his

opinions on the subject are succinctly expressed:

"If you insist only on his transcendence, you restrict him
And if you insist only on his immanence you limit him
If you maintain both aspects you are right
An Imām and a master in the spiritual sciences
Whoso would say he is two things is a polytheist
While the one who isolates him tries to regulate him
Beware of comparing him if you profess duality
And, if unity, beware of making him transcendent
You are not he and you are he and
You see him in the essences of things both boundless and limited."¹³¹

3.5. Notes

1. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, pp.139-40; Chittick, The Sufi Path of Knowledge, pp. 169-70.
2. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.3, p.187; Chittick, The Sufi Path of Knowledge, p.363.
3. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.3, p.187.
4. Ibid., vol.3, p.187.
5. Ibid., vol.3, pp.188-92; Chittick, The Sufi Path of Knowledge, pp.99 and 363.
6. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.3, pp.248 and 348.
7. Corbin, op.cit., pp.50-1.
8. Ibid., p.50.
9. For more details on this point see Chittick, The Sufi Path of Knowledge, p.402.
10. For examples of the Qur'anic use of the term see Chittick, The Sufi Path of Knowledge, p.200.
11. Ibid., p.199.
12. The majority of Muslim scholars believe that Khadir was a prophet; others believe that he was a Friend of God. For a detailed discussion on this point see E.R., article 'Khadir'.
13. Chodkiewicz, op.cit., pp.98-9; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, p.138.
14. Chodkiewicz, op.cit., p.99; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, Cairo, 1293 A.H., vol.2, p.150.
15. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.3, p.248.
16. Ibid., vol.3, p.248.
17. Ibid., vol.3, p.248.
18. The Qur'an, 65:12.
19. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.3, p.249.
20. Ibid., vol.1, p.144.

For biographical information about this Shiʿite Imam see E.I.², article 'ʿAli al-Rida'.

21. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.3, p.249.

For biographical information about this Shī^cite Imām see E.I.¹, article 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-^cĀbidīn'.

22. Kāmil Muṣṭafā, al-Shaybī, al-Ṣila bayn al-Taṣawwuf wa'l-Tashayyū^c, Cairo, 1969, p.155.
23. The celebrated Ṣūfī master Abu'l-Qāsim al-Junayd of Baghdad (d.298/910). He is considered "the most respectable" and upright among the Ṣūfīs, and it is his devotion to the doctrine of "sobriety" that gained him this respect. He is also well-known for his outstanding opinions regarding "the Covenant (between God and his Friends) and 'passing away'". Great attention was paid by al-Junayd to the concept of the Ṣūfī "states" (aḥwāl); however, he does not differentiate between the "states" and the "stations" (maqāmāt) in the usual Ṣūfī manner. on the political side Junayd held the opinion that total obedience to the Muslim leaders is the sign of a true mystic; see Baldick, Mystical Islam, pp.44-6; E.I.², article 'al-Djunayd'.
24. By al-Ash^carī he either meant Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ash^carī (d.324 /935), the founder of the Islamic theological school called the Ash^carites, or the followers of this school in general.
25. Ibn ^cArabi, Fut, vol.3, pp.250-1.
26. "Shu^cayb b. Ḥusayn Abū Madyan (d.1197-8) was perhaps the most renowned master of his day and was quite clearly a major influence on Ibn ^cArabi. His tomb near Tlemcen in Algeria is still the object of pilgrimage." See Austin, The Ṣūfīs of Andalusia, p.69.
27. For more references see Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of knowledge, p.405, n.24.
28. Ibn ^cArabi, Fut, vol.3, p.249.
29. Ibid., vol.3, p.249.
30. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.252; Ibn ^cArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.198.
31. See Chapt.2, p.45.
32. Ibn ^cArabi, Fut, Cairo, 1293 A.H., vol.2, p.163; Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, p.276.

33. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.253; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.199.
34. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.325.
35. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, Cairo, 1293 A.H., vol.2, pp.163-4; Chittick, The Sufi Path of Knowledge, pp.399-400.
36. Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.24.
37. Cf. Chapt.2, p.45.
38. Chittick, The Sufi Path of Knowledge, pp.326-7; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, 1293, vol.2, p.743.
39. See Chapt.2, p.54.
40. See Chapt.2, p.45.
41. See Chapt.6, p.189.
42. See Chapt.2, p.51.
43. See Chapt.2, p.54.
44. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, Cairo, 1293, vol.2, pp.163-4; Chittick, The Sufi Path of Knowledge, p.327.
45. M. S. Howell, Arabic Grammar, Allahabad, 1880-1911, vol.1, p.509.
46. See Chap.2, p.60.
47. See Chap.2, p.46.
48. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.141; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.115.
49. A. E. ʿAffifi, The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid dīn-Ibnul ʿArabi, Lahore, 1964, p.87.
50. See above, pp.86-7.
51. See above, p.90.
52. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.272; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.214.
53. Bukhārī, The Saḥīḥ, vol.4, p.103.
54. Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī Maḥmūd b. Aḥmad al-ʿAynī, ʿUmdat al-Qārī' : Sharḥ Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Beirut, n.d., vol.20, p.165.
55. Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.215.
56. Ibid., vol.1, p.69.

57. See al-Khaṭīb al-Baḡhdādī, al-Kifāya fī ʿIlm al-Riwāya, Beirut, 1985, pp.63-6.
58. The Qur'ān, 51:20-21.
59. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.275; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.217.
60. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, pp.92-3; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.81.
61. T. Izutsu, Ṣūfism and Taoism, Berkeley, 1984, p.39.
62. He is referring to The Qur'ān 15:29, 38:72. Both of these verses say: "When I have shaped him, and breathed my spirit in him, fall you down, bowing before him!" See A. J. Arberry, The Qur'ān Interpreted, London, 1980, vol.1, p.282 and vol.2, p.163.
63. To demonstrate that God loves man and yearns for him in the same way as man loves woman and yearns for her Ibn ʿArabī quotes the traditions: "O David, I long for them even more," and "I do not hesitate in what I do as much as in taking the soul of my faithful servant. He hates death as much as I hate to hurt him; but he must meet me." For the sources of these traditions see Chap.2, pp.58-9 and 45-6.
64. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.274; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, pp.216-17.
65. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.275; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, pp.217-18.
66. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.276; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, pp.218-19.
67. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, 1293, vol.2, pp.250-1.
68. al-Ṣafādī, op.cit., vol.4, p.174.
69. Maqqarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.178; Ḥusaynī, op.cit., pp.46-7.
70. Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.2, p.330.
71. See for example Ibn ʿArabī's statement at the opening of the Fut, where he declares that he accepts and believes in all that Muḥammad has established. Fut, vol.1, p.171. And Fut, vol.1, p.206, where he states clearly that sexual relation between a man and a woman is not allowed if the relation does not fulfil the conditions established by the Sharīʿa.
72. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.2, p.303; see Chap.2, p.57.
73. See Chap.2, p.59.

74. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.4, pp.85-6; vol.6, pp.118-19.
75. ʿAffifi, op.cit., pp.70-1.
76. See Chap.2, pp.57-8.
77. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.272; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.214.
78. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.1, p.47.
79. ʿAffifi, op.cit., p.73; ʿAbd al-Karim b. Ibrahim al-Jili, al-Insan al-Kamil, Cairo, 1945-9, vol.2, p.98.
80. Though it may also be argued that it does not necessarily signify that the existence of Adam's spirit preceded that of Muhammad's spirit, because it was prophecy that the prophet was talking about and not existence.
81. See Ibn ʿArabi's opinion on this matter in Chap.2, pp.60-3.
82. al-Hakim al-Nisaburi, al-Mustadrak ʿala al-Sahihayn, Hyderabad, 1334/1915, vol.2, pp.600-01.
83. Ibid., p.600; Tibrizi, op.cit., vol.3, p.1234.
84. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.239.
85. See Chap.2, p.52.
86. Ibid., pp.52-3.
87. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.292.
88. See Chap.2, p.58.
89. Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, vol.2, p.360; ʿAffifi, op.cit., p.74.
90. ʿAffifi, op.cit., pp.74-5.
91. See Chap.2, p.57.
92. ʿAffifi, op.cit., p.74.
93. Ibn al-Shah, op.cit., p.17.
94. He is referring to the tradition, "God created Adam in his form."
95. ʿAffifi, op.cit., p.78.
96. He is referring indirectly to the tradition, "I was an unknown treasure."
97. Again he is referring indirectly to the last part of the above-mentioned tradition. This part is, "By me they knew me."

98. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.50; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, pp.48-9.
99. Baldick, Mystical Islam, p.84.
100. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.51; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.50.
101. Austin, op.cit., p.272; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, p.214.
102. See Chap.2, p.52.
103. Chittick, The Sūfī Path of Knowledge, p.240; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, 1293, vol.2, pp.113-14.
104. Chittick, The Sūfī Path of Knowledge, p.240; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, 1293, vol.2, p.225.
105. Chittick, The Sūfī Path of Knowledge, p.240; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, 1293, vol.3, pp.186-7.
106. See Chap.2, p.49.
107. Chittick, The Sūfī Path of Knowledge, p.196; Ibn ʿArabi, Fut, 1293, vol.1, p.187.
108. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.260; Ibn ʿArabi, Fus, vol.1, pp.206-07.

At the beginning of this statement reference is made to the story of Moses and his anonymous instructor, identified by Muslim writers with al-Khaḍir, related in the Qurʾān: Chap.18: 59-81.

109. Howell, op.cit., vol.2, p.628.
110. ʿAffīfī, op.cit., p.86; Ḥusayn b. Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj, al-Tawāṣīn, Paris, 1913, pp.11-12.

The first intellect in Ibn ʿArabi's doctrine equals the pen (al-qalam) in Ḥallāj's doctrine. The pen is referred to in ḥadīth as being the first thing to be created by God. See al-Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.9, pp.232-3.

111. Ḥallāj, op.cit., pp.11 and 13; ʿAffīfī, op.cit., p.86.
112. ʿAffīfī, op.cit., p.86.
113. Ibid., p.87.
114. Ibid., p.75; Farhad Daftary, The Ismāʿīlīs, their history and doctrines, Cambridge, 1990, p.66.

115. See Chap.2, p.46.
116. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.2, pp.330-2.
117. W. R. Inge, Christian Mysticism, London, 1899, pp.46-8; ʿAffifī, op.cit., pp.87-8.
118. Another example of this influence on Ibn ʿArabī is found in his Tarjumān al-Ashwāq where he says, "My beloved is three although he is one." See Nicholson, The Tarjumān al-Ashwāq, p.70.
119. Rosenthal, Franz, 'Ibn ʿArabī between "Philosophy" and "Mysticism"', in Oriens, vol.31, Leiden, 1988, pp.1-35.
120. Izutsu, op.cit., pp.48-9.
121. See for example Chap.2.2.1, traditions no.3, 4, 5, 12, 14, 16, 22 and 35.
122. The Qur'ān: 42:11.
123. Cf. the Qur'ān: 2:85.
124. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, pp.73-4; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.68.
125. Izutsu, op.cit., p.50; ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī, Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam, Cairo, 1904, p.45.
126. Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.69.
127. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.3, pp.338-9.
128. Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.73; For the source of this tradition see Chap.2, p.54.
129. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, pp.75-6; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, pp.70-1.
130. Izutsu, op.cit., pp.55-6; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.70; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.3, pp.344-7.
131. Austin, The Bezels of Wisdom, p.75; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.70.

Chapter (4)

al-Nawawī

Life and Hadīth

4.1. Life

4.1.1. Sources of information

The most important biography of al-Nawawī was written by his student Ibn al-^cAttār (d.724/1324), entitled Tuhfat al-Tālibīn fī Tarjamat Shaykhinā al-Imām al-Nawawī. This work is still in manuscript, and is forty-six folios long. The biography was completed about thirty-two years after al-Nawawī's death, in 708/1307.¹ This illustrates the fact that historical writing during that time depended on memory. This is due to the fact that "with the Arab the natural seat of a book was the memory; it may or may not be committed to writing".²

The other historians who wrote about Nawawī's life were contemporaries of Ibn al-^cAttār and al-Mizzī (645-742/1255-1344), who was also a student of al-Nawawī, and their information on Nawawī's life were mainly obtained from them. Examples of these historians are: al-Dhahabī (673-748/1275-1340), Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (727-771/1329-1373) and Ibn Kathīr (671-744/1273/1346). They bear abundant evidence to the influence of the study of the Sunna in the methodology of biographical studies. Two distinctive signs of this influence are in evidence. The first of these is that the companions of the leading Muslim figures played a similar role to the one attributed to the companions of the prophet in the study of his biography. That is to say, in both cases the main sources of information were supposed to be the companions. The other sign of this influence is that, as in the study of the Sunna, samā^c (oral method) was the major method of the study of the biographies and history in general. Consequently, great attention was paid to the isnād (chain of transmitters), when the author of the historical work was not a contemporary of the one about whom he was writing.

The other sources to the study of Nawawī's biography are printed in Über das Leben und die Schriften des Scheich Abū Zakarijā Jahjā al-Nawawī, by H.

Ferdinand Wüstenfeld. In addition to the preceding works, Nawawī's own works complete the sources to the study of his life.

Owing to the preceding information about the nature and scope of the biographical works on al-Nawawī, it can be said that what has been written about him is likely to contain a fair amount of genuine evidence.

4.1.2. Names and descent

Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā b. Sharaf b. Murri b. Ḥasan b. Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Jum^ca b. Ḥizām al-Ḥizāmī al-Nawawī al-Dimashqī. Born in Nawā south of Damascus in Muḥarram 631/1233.³

Nawawī's surname, al-Ḥizāmī, was derived from the name of his ancestor, Ḥizām. al-Nawawī related to Ibn al-^cAṭṭār that some of his ancestors claimed that they descended from Ḥizām Abū Ḥakīm, the prophet's companion (ṣaḥābī). But according to al-Nawawī they did not. Nawawī believed that his ancestor Ḥizām was one of the ordinary Arabs who dwelled in al-Jawlān, south of Damascus and settled there in a small town called Nawā. From Nawā came the family name which could be spelt either al-Nawawī or al-Nawāwī.⁴

al-Nawawī was also called al-Dimashqī because he lived in Damascus for about twenty-eight years. According to ^cAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak (d.181/797), who dealt with Arab tribal genealogy, if any one lived in a city or a place for four years he could be attributed to it.⁵

al-Nawawī's name is always associated with the word Shāfi^{cī}. The word designates Nawawī as a follower of the Shāfi^{cī} school of law, which is one of the four distinctive Sunni schools of law. I do not intend to tackle here the question of how these four schools of law came into existence, as this involves complicated historical events which need to be dealt with independently. Joseph Schacht has dealt with the early schools of law such as the Syrians, the Kufans, and the Medinans, within which many "personal" schools of law came into existence, and it is sufficient here to say that from these schools the only survivors are those of

Abū Ḥanīfa (d.150/767), Mālik (d.179/795), al-Shāfiʿī (d.204/820) and Ibn Ḥanbal (d.241/855).⁶

4.1.3. al-Nawawī's childhood

al-Nawawī's tendency towards religion can be dated from a religious experience which occurred when he was a child. It is said that he experienced a vision, which was believed to be in the Laylat al-qadr (The night of decrees).⁷ Laylat al-qadr is the night in which the revelation of the Qur'ān started. Muslims believe that on this night every year the angels descend with mercy and blessing to the righteous by the command of their Lord.⁸

The preceding incident was related to Ibn al-ʿAttār by al-Nawawī's father. It may have reflected the atmosphere in which al-Nawawī was brought up and had a predominating influence on the development of his religious inclination. His biographers tell us that when he finished learning the Qur'ān by heart Nawawī had not yet attained the age of majority.⁹

4.1.4. Further studies

In 649/1251, when al-Nawawī was nineteen years of age, his father brought him to Damascus to obtain formal education.¹⁰ There he joined the Halqa of the professor (al-shaykh) Tāj al-Dīn al-Fazārī (630-690/1232-1291),¹¹ who was a famous Shāfiʿī jurist and a muftī. Beside his post as an incumbent professor of law in the afore-mentioned Halqa in the Amawid mosque in Damascus, al-Fazārī was the professor of law at the Badrā'iyya college of Shāfiʿī law in Damascus.¹² This means that the professors of law at that time could be appointed to teach in more than one institution of learning.

Finding himself shelterless, al-Nawawī left al-Fazārī's Halqa for the Rawāhiyya college of Shāfiʿī law. In such a college, residence and stipend were provided.¹³

In the Rawāhiyya Nawawī first started to study medicine. He told his

student Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, "But then my heart grew dark, and for days to come I was unable to do any studies. So, I revolved the problem in my mind, and tried to find out the matter which caused me to be in this state. Then God inspired in my heart the explanation that the cause was my studying medicine...I gave up studying medicine and my heart was illuminated, and I returned to normal."¹⁴

In the *Rawāḥiyya*, al-Nawawī was a hard-working student. We are told that he lived on nothing more than the stipend (*jirāya*) of the college.¹⁵ This means that the stipend of the college was enough for subsistence, but on the other hand the expression "nothing more" (*lā ghayr*), gives the impression that it was not enough to live in comfort; it also gives the impression that some of the students had other sources of income.

In four and a half months al-Nawawī knew *al-Tanbīh* (a work on *Shāfiʿī* law) by heart. In addition, in the same year he learned and knew by heart a quarter of *al-Muhadhdhab* (a long reference work of *Shāfiʿī* jurisprudence). Thus, al-Nawawī's teacher, al-Kamāl Ishāq (d.650/1250) appointed him as a teaching assistant or a repetitor (*muʿīd*) in his group.¹⁶ This post, i.e., *muʿīd*, is described by Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī as follows:

"It is the responsibility of the repetitor to perform certain functions in addition to learning the law courses: to explain the lesson to some of the students, to be of use to them, and to perform the function required by the term repetition. If he were not to perform these functions, there would be no difference between him and the fellow (*ṣāhib*), and he will not have acknowledged God's grace for meriting the post of repetition."¹⁷

The word *ṣāhib* mentioned above by Subkī was derived from the word *ṣuḥba* (fellowship), the last stage of studentship. The function of this stage of learning was to qualify the student of law to become a *mudarris* (professor of law).¹⁸

Ibn al-^cAṭṭār states that Nawawī related to him that he used to study twelve lessons a day classified as follows: two lessons on *al-Wasīṭ*, a juristic work written by al-Ghazālī (d.505/1111), a third lesson on *al-Muhadhdhab* of Abū Ishāq al-

Shirāzī (d.476/1083), a lesson on al-Jam^ʿ bayn al-Ṣaḥīhayn of al-Ḥamīdī (d.488/1095), a lesson on Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, a lesson on al-Luma^ʿ, a grammatical work by Ibn Jinnī (d.392/1002), a lesson on the isnād (the chain of transmitters of ḥadīth), a lesson on al-taṣrīf (morphology), a lesson on uṣūl al-fiqh (the principles of jurisprudence, or the science of legal theory and methodology), a lesson on Iṣlāḥ al-Mantiq, a work by Ibn al-Sikkīt (d.244/858) on al-lughā (lexicology), and a lesson on uṣūl al-dīn (theology).¹⁹

al-Nawawī also studied al-kutub al-sitta (the six basic reference works of traditions), the Muwattaʾ of Mālik, the Musnad of Ibn Ḥanbal, the Sharḥ al-Sunna of al-Baghawī (d.516/1122), the Sunan of al-Daraqutnī (d.385/995) and many more works in the field of ḥadīth.²⁰ Besides, he studied al-Risāla of al-Qushayrī and ʿAmal al-Yawm wa'l-Layla of Ibn al-Sunnī, both of which are mystical works.²¹

4.1.5. Teachers

4.1.5.1. Teachers of law

1. al-Kamal Ishāq al-Maghribī (d.650/1252).²² 2. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Nawḥ al-Maqdisī (d.654/1256). In addition to his post as a professor of Shāfiʿī law at the Rawāḥiyya, he was also the chief judge of Damascus at the time.²³ 3. ʿUmar b. Saʿd al-Irbilī (d.675/1276), the Shāfiʿī jurist.²⁴ 4. Abu'l-Ḥasan Sallār b. al-Ḥasan al-Irbilī (d.670/1271), the Shāfiʿī jurist.²⁵

The first three of these professors were students of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (d.543/1148), who was the first professor of ḥadīth at Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya.²⁶

4.1.5.2. Teachers of ḥadīth and its sciences

The study of ḥadīth was different from that of other subjects. It was not enough to study ḥadīth inside a mosque or a college. Thus, Nawawī collected ḥadīth from a number of scholars, some of whom were professors of ḥadīth in

certain colleges and some were not. The most important of these were:

1. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. ʿUmar al-Wāsiṭī (d.664/1265). The Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim was transmitted to al-Nawawī by him.²⁷
2. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī (d.662/1263). A Shāfiʿī jurist and one of the most famous authorities of ḥadīth; because of this he was called shaykh al-shuyūkh (elder of elders).²⁸
3. Zayn al-Dīn b. ʿAbd al-Dā'im (d.668/1269).²⁹
4. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Ḥarastānī (d.662/1263), a Shāfiʿī jurist and a professor of ḥadīth who succeeded Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ as a professor of ḥadīth at the Ashrafiyya College.³⁰
5. Ibn Abi'l-Yusr (d.672/1273).³¹
6. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ṣayrafī, the Hanbalī scholar (d.678/1279).³²
7. Shams al-Dīn b. Abī ʿUmar (d.682/1283).³³
8. Abu'l-Baqā' Khālīd b. Yūsuf (d.663/1264). He was skilled in the criticism of ḥadīth and was a professor at the Nūriyya college of traditions.³⁴
9. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. ʿĪsā al-Murādī (d.668/1269). A Shāfiʿī jurist who was also skilled in the sciences of traditions, lexicography, and mysticism.³⁵

4.1.5.3. Teachers of the principles of jurisprudence

Nawawī studied the principles of jurisprudence (uṣūl al-fiqh) under the direction of many scholars; the most famous of them was the chief judge, ʿUmar b. Bandār b. ʿUmar al-Taflīsī (d.672/1273). Under his direction Nawawī studied al-Muntakhab by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d.606/1209), and a portion of al-Mustaṣfā of al-Ghazālī (d.505/1111).³⁶

4.1.5.4. Teachers of lexicography (ʿilm al-lughā), syntax (naḥw), and morphology (tasrīf)

1. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Mālikī, under whose direction Nawawī studied the Lumaʿ of Ibn Jinnī.³⁷
2. Aḥmad al-Miṣrī (d.664/1265), under whose direction Nawawī studied the Isḥāḥ al-Mantiq of Ibn al-Sikkīt.³⁸
3. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Mālik (d.672/1274), the author of many famous works such as al-Alfiyya, al-Kāfiya al-Shāfiya, and al-Tashīl. Under his supervision Nawawī studied some of

these works.³⁹

al-Nawawī spent six years studying. His biographers tell us that he mastered the sciences of tradition and became skilled in all branches of law.⁴⁰

4.1.6. Teaching posts

In 655/1267, Nawawī was appointed to the professorship of the Ashrafiyya college of ḥadīth in Damascus in succession to Abū Shāma, the famous Damascene historian who died in the same year. al-Nawawī continued to occupy this post until his death in 676/1277.⁴¹

The Ashrafiyya was the highest college of tradition in Damascus. It was established by the Ayyubid ruler, al-Malik al-Ashraf Mūsā (576-635/1181-1238). Inside this college, al-Ashraf built a separate residence for the professor of ḥadīth. He also renounced many of his properties as waqfs to support the needs of this college.⁴² A further explanation of waqf is that it is "a settlement of property under which ownership of the property is immobilised and the usufruct thereof is devoted to a purpose which is deemed charitable by the law."⁴³

al-Nawawī spent about eleven years teaching at the Ashrafiyya. However, he declined to receive the salary (maʿlūm) which was designated for the professor of this college. Ibn al-ʿAttār suggests that Nawawī refused to have this salary because he believed that teaching the religion was, in his specific instance, an "individual obligation (fard ʿayn)",⁴⁴ and according to Islamic law the reward for such duties should not be in this world.⁴⁵

According to al-Subkī the function of the professor of ḥadīth, the post to which al-Nawawī was appointed, was to teach ḥadīth clearly, to listen carefully to what his students read under his direction in order to correct them, and to be patient with them because they were God's deputation. In addition, whenever a ḥadīth-expert exclusively reported a work on ḥadīth he had to learn its contents by heart.⁴⁶

Meanwhile, al-Nawawī often gave lectures on Shāfiʿī law in the Iqbāliyya

and the Rukniyya (Shāfiʿī colleges of law in Damascus) in stead of (niyāba ʿan) Ibn Khallikān (608-681/1208-1282), and in the Falakiyya, which was also a Shāfiʿī college of law in Damascus. His post in these colleges was Nāʾib Mudarris (assistant professor of law), and his function was to replace the incumbent professors of law of these colleges during their absence.⁴⁷

4.1.7. Works

In 655/1255, Nawawī began to write.⁴⁸ He made a permanent contribution to the study of Islam. This is represented in his works, the most famous among which are: 1. al-Minhāj fī Sharḥ Muslim, a commentary on Muslim's Ṣaḥīḥ. 2. al-Taqrīb wa'l-Taysīr, an abridgement of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth. 3. Minhāj al-Tālibīn, a work on Shāfiʿī law, finished in 669/1270. 4. al-Majmūʿ: Sharḥ al-Muḥadhdhab, a long reference work of Shāfiʿī jurisprudence. 5. al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawiyya, a collection of traditions. 6. Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn, the work in which he classified and linked the terminology of mysticism to the Qurʾān and ḥadīth. Nawawī finished this work in 670/1271. 7. al-Adhkār, finished 667/1268.

A list of his works is provided by his biographer, Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār, and by Wüstenfeld in Über das Leben und die Schriften des Scheich Abū Zakariyā Jahjā al-Nawawī.⁴⁹

4.1.8. Students

al-Nawawī's best known students were: 1. ʿAlā' al-Dīn b. al-ʿAṭṭār (645-724/1245-1324), who became a professor of ḥadīth at the Nūriyya college of traditions and a professor of law at the Qūṣiyya college of Shāfiʿī law. al-Dhahabī attributed to him about eighty works on the biographies of native scholars trained in the traditional sciences.⁵⁰ 2. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Mizzī (d.742/1343). A well known ḥadīth-expert.⁵¹

4.1.9. Personality

al-Nawawī was famous for his piety and renunciation. We are told that he led a hard life, though his status as a professor enabled him to lead a comparatively easy one if he had so desired. Because of his piety (waraʿ) he refused to eat the fruits of Damascus. Being asked about the reason of this he said:

"Damascus is full of charitable trusts and properties of lunatics, minors and spendthrifts. According to Shariʿa law the guardian should manage their affairs like a good father. But most of the guardians do not act in accordance with the Shariʿa, so, how can I feel reassured that it is lawful to eat Damascus fruits?"⁵²

Nawawī was one of the scholars who became very outspoken and used their influence upon the governors for the good of the people. He dared to criticise the policy of al-Zāhir Baybars (d.676/1277) on many occasions. When the latter unfairly imposed war taxes upon the Syrians, Nawawī wrote him a letter saying that the ajnad (soldiers) should be supported from the Bayt al-Māl (the public treasury), and that it was against Shariʿa law to take expensive war taxes from the people when the public treasury was not empty.⁵³ In reaction to Nawawī's letter, Baybars issued a severe decree, ordering the "gardens of the Damascenes" to be confiscated, and Nawawī's salary to be stopped. In reply to this decree Nawawī wrote to Baybars telling him that the people should not be punished for a letter that they did not write. In the same letter Nawawī confirmed, "As for me I would not be affected by your threat."⁵⁴ Not only this but Nawawī is also reported to have confronted Baybars many times in the high court (Dār al-ʿAdl), and it is attributed to Baybars that he said, "I am terrified of him."⁵⁵ This was most probably because Baybars feared that Nawawī could incite the people against him, as was the case of ʿIzz al-Dīn b. ʿAbd al-Salām.⁵⁶

When Baybars issued a decree saying that a teacher should not occupy more than one post Nawawī again wrote to him, asking him insistently to cancel this decree.⁵⁷ Copies of Nawawī's letters to Baybars are found in the biography by Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār.

According to the popular romance, Sīrat al-Zāhir Baybars, Baybars is reported to have become blind after being cursed by al-Nawawī.⁵⁸ As this incident is reported neither by Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, nor by the other biographers of al-Nawawī, it is difficult to believe.

Nawawī was able to criticise Baybars in that way, probably, because he was not dependent on his teaching posts for a living. We are told by Ibn al-^cAṭṭār that he refused to be paid for teaching, a report which can be supported by the foregoing statement of al-Nawawī in which he told Baybars that his threat would not affect him.

4.1.10. Sources of income

Though he refused to take the professorial endowed salary, Nawawī continued to be a resident of the Rawāḥiyya college of law until the last days of his life.⁵⁹ For other needs he was supported by his father, Sharaf al-Dīn al-Nawawī (d.682/1284) who owned a shop and a garden and was relatively successful.⁶⁰

4.1.11. Travels and death

Nawawī left Damascus only on two occasions. The first was in 651/1252, when he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and visited Medina. During this journey and all through his life Nawawī's health suffered greatly.⁶¹ The second was in his last days, when he visited Jerusalem. From there he returned to his father's house in Nawā in 676/1277, where his health suffered severely. He died, unmarried, on 24 Rajab 676/22 Dec. 1277.⁶² Ibn al-^cAṭṭār confirmed that no tomb was erected on Nawawī's grave (he believed that this was according to al-Nawawī's will). But "his grave in Nawā is still held in honour", said Ibn al-^cAṭṭār.⁶³

4.2. Nawawī's main opinions in the field of ʿulūm al-ḥadīth (sciences of traditions)

Like the majority of ḥadīth scholars, Nawawī classifies ḥadīth into three

categories: ṣaḥīḥ, ḥasan, and ḍaʿīf. It is worthy of note that the first to give this classification was al-Khaṭṭābī (d.388/998), who is reported to have claimed that there was consensus of opinion among the authorities of ḥadīth about it.⁶⁴ Ibn Kathīr (d.774/1372), criticises this classification and states that if it is made with reference to the essence of the character of ḥadīth, then there are only two types of ḥadīth: ṣaḥīḥ (genuine) and kadhīb (deceitful), and if it is made with reference to the technical terms used by the authorities on the subject to designate specific features of ḥadīth, then there are more than three types of ḥadīth.⁶⁵ Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d.911/1505), disapproves of Ibn Kathīr's argument, stating that al-Khaṭṭābī's classification of ḥadīth, in which he was followed by Nawawī and the majority of ḥadīth scholars, is made with reference to the technical terms of ḥadīth, and that all the technical terms of ḥadīth are traceable to one of the three types of Khattābī's classification, namely, the ṣaḥīḥ, the ḥasan, and the ḍaʿīf.⁶⁶

The definition of the three types of ḥadīth is cited by Nawawī as follows: First the ṣaḥīḥ, "huwa mā ittasaḥ sanaduh bi'l-ʿuḍul al-dābiṭīn min ghayr shudhūdh wa lā ʿilla."⁶⁷ This reads in translation: It is a tradition whose isnād is closely interlinked with reliable authorities, and without any irregularity or defect. Secondly, the ḥasan, "huwa mā ʿurif makhrajuh wa ishtahar rijāluh"⁶⁸, which means it is a tradition which has been transmitted via a well-known channel (makhraj) and all the authorities who reported it are well known. Many scholars attempted to define the ḥasan. For example, al-Tirmidhī (d.297/910) is reported to have said that the ḥasan is a tradition whose isnād does not include an authority who is suspected of telling lies. Besides, it should be transmitted via more than one channel. Moreover, it should not be a shādhḍh ("A tradition of good authority yet in conflict with another similarly attested").⁶⁹ However, it seems to me that neither al-Nawawī nor the other scholars on the subject have succeeded in giving a clear definition of the ḥasan. Thus the definition of this type of ḥadīth remained obscure. This is evident in the conflicting statements which al-Suyūṭī quotes in his Tadrib al-Rāwī as examples of the definition of the ḥasan.⁷⁰ The lack of a clear

definition of the ḥasan is reflected in later works on the subject. For example Guillaume defines the ḥasan as follows:

"ḥasan or fair tradition is that which stands midway between genuine and weak. It may be either genuine or false. It is fair because nothing is known against the character of its reporter, and because it can sometimes be supported by other evidence."⁷¹

The clearest definition of the ḥasan is perhaps the one given by Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, according to which the ḥasan is a tradition whose isnād includes a transmitter with a blameless record, or known to be honest and truthful, but he is not as reliable as the transmitters of the ṣaḥīḥ in keeping the exact words when transmitting ḥadīth.⁷²

Thirdly, the daʿīf. According to al-Nawawī it is a tradition which fulfils neither the required conditions of the ṣaḥīḥ nor those of the ḥasan, "huwa mā lam yajmaʿ ʿalā ṣifāt al-ṣaḥīḥ aw al-ḥasan".⁷³

In Nawawī's point of view only the ṣaḥīḥ and the ḥasan can be used to establish the law and the articles of faith. However, this does not apply to khabar al-wāḥid (an isolated tradition). Nawawī and others, are of the opinion that even when khabar al-wāḥid is distinguished as a ṣaḥīḥ, it only means that the conditions of the ṣaḥīḥ are fulfilled in this tradition, and it does not mean that this tradition constitutes a decisive argument in the matter which it deals with.⁷⁴

In spite of the fact that Nawawī rejects the usage of the daʿīf to establish the law and the articles of faith, he is of the opinion that this type of traditions can be used in the faḍā'il (ethical behaviour), targhīb and tarhīb (inspiring awe and arousing desire). The following are a selection of statements made by al-Nawawī in this connection: 1) He says in his Taqrīb:

"According to the scholars of ḥadīth and the others it is permissible to adopt less strict standards of isnād, to quote weak traditions save the mawḍūʿ (fabricated), and to act in accordance with the contents of these traditions, even without pointing out that they are weak, in subjects other than the attributes of God (ṣifāt Allāh), legal judgements such as ḥalāl and ḥarām (that which is allowed and that which is prohibited), and the subjects which are related to one of these two."⁷⁵

2) In his Fatawā Nawawī says in connection with a weak tradition justifying talqīn (instructing a dying Muslim to say a specific formula):

"It is a weak tradition but one feels content with it (ḥadīth daʿīf wa lākin yusta'nas bih). The scholars of ḥadīth and the other scholars are agreed on al-musāmaha (indulgence) towards traditions of fada'il, targhib and tarhib."76

3) In al-Adhkār, Nawawī states the following:

"The men of learning, among whom are scholars of ḥadīth, jurists, and others have said that it is permissible and recommendable too, to act in al-fada'il, targhib and tarhib, in accordance with the weak tradition unless it is a fabricated one. As for the legal judgements concerning that which is allowed, that which is prohibited, sale contracts, marriage, divorce, and the like, they can only be enforced with genuine or fair traditions. The weak traditions can only be used in these matters as a precaution. For instance, if someone is informed of a weak tradition, according to which a specific type of sale or marriage contracts is considered blameworthy, it is recommended for this person to keep away from this type of contracts, but it is not obligatory."77

Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal is reported to have held a similar opinion on the preceding subject. However, this claim is denied by Ibn Taymiyya as will be seen later.⁷⁸ Examples of other scholars who held similar opinions to that of al-Nawawī with regard to the daʿīf are Ibn Maḥdī (d.198/814)⁷⁹ and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d.463/1071).⁸⁰ Nawawī's opponents on this point are Yaḥyā b. Muʿīn, Abū Bakr b. al-ʿArabī (d.543/1141) and Ibn Ḥazm (d.456/1054). The first two scholars are reported to have said that the daʿīf is not to be accepted under any conditions.⁸¹ Ibn Ḥazm is reported to have said:

"A tradition whose isnād goes back to the prophet, and is reported by Muslims all over the world, or by a great number of scholars or by reliable transmitters from the beginning to the end (of its isnād), but includes in its isnād one transmitter who is unknown or subject to distrust, is said to be accepted by some Muslims. As for us we believe it is not permissible to support such a tradition, or to accept it, or to act in accordance with its contents."82

We should also mention that Nawawī's opinion with regard to the daʿīf does

not indicate that weak traditions serve as hujja (proof). In other words, one can act in accordance with weak traditions in the faḍā'il, targhib and tarhib; however, no one is to be blamed if he does not act in accordance with these traditions.⁸³

Nawawī stood firm with his opinion that the ḍaʿīf should not be used to establish legal judgements and articles of faith. This is demonstrated in Nawawī's views on the mursal, a division of the ḍaʿīf.

The plural form from mursal is either mursala or marāsil, which was used originally to describe the nūq (she-camels), meaning to say they are mobile or fast runners (sahlat al-sayr, or khifāf).⁸⁴ Later on mursal was used metaphorically by Muslim scholars in the science of traditions to designate the ḥadīth in a certain manner. Mursal according to the majority of ḥadīth scholars is a tradition based on an isnād from which the name of the prophet's companion who reported it has disappeared. In other words it is the direct narration of the ṭabīʿī (successor) on the prophet.⁸⁵ However, Nawawī's definition of mursal is different. He says in this connection:

"We mean by mursal a tradition whose isnād is interrupted, whether by the disappearance of a name or more than one name of its authorities. But most ḥadīth scholars do not agree with this. They say that the mursal designates only the ṭabīʿī's direct narration on the prophet."⁸⁶

When Nawawī's definition of mursal is examined we realise that it includes also the munqatiʿ and the muḍdal. In other words the preceding two types of traditions are branches of mursal. The munqatiʿ is a tradition whose isnād is interrupted in whatever way this interruption has occurred.⁸⁷ The muḍdal is a tradition whose isnād is interrupted by missing two or more than two of its links.⁸⁸ Whether the mursal designates only the ṭabīʿī's narration on the prophet, or it also includes the munqatiʿ and the muḍdal, Nawawī confirms that he does not accept mursal as a proof by means of which the law or the articles of faith can be established.⁸⁹ However, as a category of ḍaʿīf it can be used in the faḍā'il, targhib and tarhib as mentioned earlier. In the next Chapter we will see Nawawī using

mursal traditions to argue for the permissibility of standing up to show respect to others.

It is worthy of note that in Mālikī circles, mursal traditions were used as legislative sources. In The Muwaṭṭa' there are about 222 mursal traditions, which were used to establish the law.⁹⁰ It is also said that Abū Ḥanīfa and Ibn Ḥanbal used the mursal to establish the law. Even al-Shāfi'ī, who is known to have adopted stricter standards to accept ḥadīth, is reported to have accepted all the mursal traditions which were reported on the authority of the famous ṭabi'ī, Ibn al-Musayyab (d.94/713), and used them to establish the law.⁹¹ However, Nawawī strongly denies this claim. He states that al-Shāfi'ī accepted mursal only on four conditions: 1. If the same tradition has been reported in another way (ṭariq) with a complete isnād which goes back to the prophet. 2. If the mursal is supported by another mursal which is reported by a different ḥadīth transmitter through a different channel. 3. If the mursal accords with the sayings of some of the ṣaḥāba (the prophet's companions). 4. If the majority of the Muslim scholars have given a judicial opinion relevant to the one which is discussed in the mursal.⁹²

Nawawī accepted only five works as canonical collections of traditions. These works are: 1) The Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī. 2) The Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim. 3) The Sunan of Abū Dāwūd (d.275/888). 4) The Sunan of al-Tirmidhī (d.279/892). 5) The Sunan of al-Nasa'ī (d.303/915). In spite of the fact that the Sunan of Ibn Māja (d.273/886) was recognised by later scholars of ḥadīth as one of the canonical collections of traditions, Nawawī denied Ibn Māja this privilege. Nawawī also considered the Musnad of Ibn Ḥanbal and the Musnad of Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī (d.203/818) less authentic than the five foregoing collections.⁹³ As to the other collections of traditions entitled the Sunan, Nawawī declares that the existence of a tradition in one of these collections does not indicate that this tradition is genuine. However, an author's declaration that he would confine his collection to the ṣaḥīḥ (such as that of Ibn Khuzayma d.311/923), is considered by Nawawī sufficient ground to accept every tradition in such a collection as a genuine one.⁹⁴

4.3. Sources of ḥadīth used by Nawawī

To support his opinions on certain Ṣūfī doctrines and practices, Nawawī makes use of the prophetic traditions. The following is an investigation of the original sources of these traditions. This investigation will show that the great majority of these traditions are traceable to the standard collections of ḥadīth, and in particular to the five collections which Nawawī accepts as canonical, which means that, generally speaking, Nawawī stuck to the standards of the acceptance of ḥadīth that he adopted. This is, however, with the exception of ḥadīth number 10, which he uses to establish his opinion that one should refrain from getting married if one does not need to. This ḥadīth, as will be seen, is not found in the standard collections, and there is no justification for al-Nawawī to use such a ḥadīth to establish this opinion, when he had made it clear that marriage is one of the subjects in connection with which ḥadīth should not be used unless it is genuine. This investigation will also show that he uses traditions of the mursal type, in other words traditions of the daʿīf category, i.e. traditions no. 14 and 15, to establish his opinion with regard to the permissibility of standing up to show respect to others. This is in conformity with Nawawī's opinion that the daʿīf can be used in subjects other than ḥalāl, ḥarām and the articles of faith.

1. Anas b. Mālik is reported to have said, "Two men (Usayd b. Ḥudayr and ʿAbbād b. Bishr, the prophet's companions) left the prophet on a very dark night. Suddenly a light came in front of them, and when they separated, the light also separated along with them."⁹⁵ (Bukhārī)

2. Ibn ʿUmar is reported to have quoted the prophet as saying, "Once three persons were travelling, and suddenly it started raining and they took shelter in a cave. The entrance of the cave got closed (by a rock) while they were inside. They said to each other, 'O you! nothing can save you except the truth, so each of you should ask Allāh's help by referring to such a deed as he thinks he did sincerely...' (they did so) hence, the rock shifted...and they came out."⁹⁶ (Bukhārī)

3. Abū Hurayra is reported to have said that the prophet said, "A woman called her son while he was in his hermitage (ṣawma^ca) and said, 'O Jurayj!' He said, 'O Allāh, my mother (is calling me) and (I am offering) my prayer (what shall I do)? She called again, 'O Jurayj!' He said, 'O Allāh! My mother (is calling me) and (I am offering) my prayer (what shall I do)?' She called again, 'O Jurayj!' He again said, 'O Allāh! My mother (is calling me) and (I am offering) my prayer (what shall I do)?' She said, 'O Allāh! Do not let Jurayj die till he sees the faces of prostitutes.' Then a shepherdess who used to come by his hermitage for grazing her sheep gave birth to a child. She was asked whose child that was, and she replied that it was from Jurayj. Jurayj said, 'Where is that woman who claims that her child is from me?' (When she was brought to him along with the child), Jurayj asked the child, 'O Bābūs (a newly born child), who is your father?' The child replied, 'The shepherd'." ⁹⁷ (Bukhārī)
4. The prophet is reported to have said, "Among the nations before you...." ⁹⁸ (Bukhārī)
5. The daughter of al-Ḥārith is reported to have said, "By Allāh, I never saw a prisoner better than Khubayb (al-Anṣārī, the prophet's companion). By Allāh, one day I saw him eating of a bunch of grapes in his hand while he was chained in irons, and there was no fruit at that time in Mecca." It is reported that the daughter of al-Ḥārith used to say, "It was a boon Allāh bestowed upon Khubayb." ⁹⁹ (Bukhārī)
6. The story of Moses, the prophet, and his anonymous travelling companion (identified by Islamic tradition with Khadīr), which is referred to in both the Qur'ān and ḥadīth. ¹⁰⁰ (Bukhārī)
7. The prophet is reported to have said, "Actions are but by intention and every person will have but that which he intended." ¹⁰¹ (Bukhārī & Muslim)
8. The prophet is reported to have said that God says, "I am the associate most free to dispense with association. As for him who carries out an action in which he has someone other than me participate, with it (the action) I have nothing to

do."¹⁰² (Muslim)

9. The prophet is reported to have said, "If anyone wants to have his deeds publicised, Allāh will publicise (his humiliation). And if anyone makes a hypocritical display (of his deeds) Allāh will make a display of him."¹⁰³ (Muslim)

10. The prophet is reported to have said, "The best of all people after the first two centuries (A.H.) is the one who has neither a wife nor children."

So far, I could not trace this tradition to any of the collections of ḥadīth which Muslims consider canonical. The only collection of ḥadīth in which this one is reported is Kunūz al-Ḥaqqā'iq, collected by ʿAbd al-Raʿuf al-Manāwī (d.1031/1622). A different version of the same tradition is reported by al-Suyūṭī in al-Jāmiʿ al-Saghīr. According to some of the authorities on the criticism of ḥadīth, i.e., al-Dhahabī and Ibn al-Qaṭṭān (d.143/760), this tradition is weak.¹⁰⁴

11. Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī is reported to have said, "When the B. Qurayza surrendered agreeing to have their fate decided by Saʿd b. Muʿādh God's messenger sent for him, and he came on an ass. When he drew near God's messenger said, 'Rise up to your chief.'" In another version it is said that the prophet said, "Rise up to the best amongst you."¹⁰⁵ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

12. Kaʿb b. Mālīk's report, in which he narrates the story of the battle of Tabūk in which he failed to take part without any excuse. It is reported that when the prophet returned from this battle Kaʿb came to him, told him that he failed to take part in that battle for no excuse and asked the prophet's forgiveness. In reply to this the prophet is reported to have said, "As regards this man (i.e. Kaʿb), he has surely told the truth. So, get up till Allāh decides your case." Later on it is said that the prophet received a revelation by means of which Kaʿb's repentance was accepted, and he rushed off to the prophet's mosque to see him. At the end of this report Kaʿb is reported to have said, "When I entered the mosque, I saw the messenger of Allāh sitting with the people around him. Ṭalḥa b. ʿUbayd Allāh swiftly came to me, shook hands with me and congratulated me. By Allāh none of the muhājirūn (Emigrants) got up for me except him."¹⁰⁶ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

13. ^cĀ'isha, the prophet's wife, is reported to have said, "I never saw anyone more like God's messenger in gravity, calm deportment, pleasant disposition (one version adds talk and speech) than Fāṭima (the prophet's daughter). When she came in to visit him he got up to welcome her, took her by the hand, kissed her and made her sit where he was sitting; and when he went to visit her she got up to welcome him, took him by the hand, kissed him, and made him sit where she was sitting."¹⁰⁷ (Abū Dāwūd)

14. ^cUmar b. al-Sā'ib, a successor (tābi^ci), is reported to have said, "One day while the prophet was sitting his foster-father (abūhu min al-ridā^ca) came. The prophet spread out the border of his garment from one side, and made him sit on it. Then the prophet's foster-mother came. The prophet spread out the border of his garment from the other side, and made her sit on it. Then the prophet's foster-brother came. The prophet stood up for him and made him sit in front of him."¹⁰⁸ (Abū Dāwūd)

This tradition is narrated by a tābi^ci (successor) directly from the prophet. That is to say, the name of the companion, from whom the tābi^ci who reported it had heard it, is missing from the isnād. Thus this tradition is from the mursal type. The same applies to the following tradition. The mursal is a division of the ḍa^cīf. However, we know that Nawawī is of the opinion that the ḍa^cīf can be put into practice in matters which are not concerned with ḥalāl, ḥarām, and the articles of faith. Besides, he states that these two traditions are used here only as extra proofs to strengthen his argument.¹⁰⁹

15. Ibn Shihāb, a successor, reported, "Umm Ḥakīm bint al-Ḥārith b. Hishām who was the wife of ^cIkrima b. Abī Jahl became a Muslim on the day of the conquest (of Mecca), and her husband ^cIkrima fled from Islam as far as Yemen. Umm Ḥakīm set out after him until she came to him in Yemen and she called him to Islam and he became a Muslim. He went to the messenger of Allāh, in the year of the conquest. When the messenger of Allāh saw him, he rushed to him in joy and did not bother to put on his cloak until he had made the pledge with him. They

were confirmed in their marriage."¹¹⁰ (Mālik)

16. Abū Hurayra is reported to have said, "God's messenger used to sit talking with us in the mosque and when he rose we kept standing till we saw him enter the house of one of his wives."¹¹¹ (Tibrīzī, al-Mishkāṭ), according to Tibrīzī this tradition is also reported by al-Bayhaqī in Shuḥab al-Imān.

17. ʿĀ'isha is reported to have said, "Zayd b. Ḥāritha came to Medina when God's messenger was in my house. When he came to him and knocked at the door God's messenger got up and went to him...he then embraced him and kissed him."¹¹² (Tirmidhī)

18. Anas b. Mālik is reported to have said, "No one was dearer to them (the companions) than God's messenger, but when they saw him they did not stand up because they knew his dislike of that."¹¹³ (Tirmidhī)

19. It is reported on the authority of Muʿāwiyā that he heard the messenger of God saying, "Let him who likes people to stand up before him come to his place in hell."¹¹⁴ (Tirmidhī & Abū Dāwūd)

20. Abū Umāma is reported to have said, "The messenger of God came out leaning on a stick and so we stood up to show respect to him. At this he said, 'Do not stand up as foreigners (aḥājim) do showing exaltation to one another (yuʿazzim baḥduhum baḥd).'"¹¹⁵ (Abū Dāwūd)

21. Abū Bakra is reported to have said that the messenger of God said, "No man should get up from where he has been sitting to allow another man to sit in his place, but you should spread out to make room, and God will provide ample room for you."¹¹⁶ (Ibn Ḥanbal)

22. The prophet is reported to have said, "Do not exalt me the way Christians did Jesus, son of Mary."¹¹⁷ (Bukhārī)

4.4. Notes

1. Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folio 1^a.
2. Lewis, op.cit., p.83.
3. al-Dhahabī, Tadhkirat al-Huffāz, Hayderabad, 1915-1918, vol.4, pp.250-1; E.I.¹, article 'Nawawī'.
4. Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folios 1^b-2^a.
5. Ibid., folio 2^b.
6. E.I.¹, article 'Fiqh'.
7. al-Subkī, Tabaqāt, vol.5, p.166.
8. Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr al-Qur'ān, Beirut, 1981, vol.3, pp.658-9.
9. Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folio 2^b.
10. Ibid., folios 2^b-3^a.
11. al-Ṭantāwī, ^cAlī, al-Imām al-Nawawī, Damascus, 1960, p.91.
12. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.325.
13. Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folios 2^b-3^a.
14. al-Dhahabī, Tadhkirat al-Huffāz, vol.4, p.251.
15. Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folios 2^b-3^a.
16. al-Nu^caymī, op.cit., vol.1, p.25.
17. al-Subkī, Mu^cid, pp.154-5; Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, p.193.
18. Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, p.128.
19. Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folio 3^b.
20. Ibid., folios 7^a-7^b.
21. Ibid., folio 7^b.
22. Nawawī, Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa'l-Lughāt, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Göttingen, 1842-7, p.23.
23. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.195.
24. Nawawī, Tahdhīb al-Asmā', p.23; Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folios 5^a-5^b.
25. Nawawī, Tahdhīb al-Asmā', p.23; al-Subkī, Tabaqāt, vol.5, pp.56-7.

26. Nawawī, Tahdhīb al-Asmā', p.23; al-Subkī, Tabaqāt, vol.5, pp.137-8.
27. Ibn Taghribirdī, op.cit., vol.7, p.221; Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, op.cit., folio 7^a.
28. al-Dhahabī, Tadhkirat al-Huffāz, vol.4, p.227.
29. Ibn Taghribirdī, op.cit., vol.7, p.230.
30. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.243.
31. Ibid., vol.13, p.267.
32. Ibid., vol.13, pp.290-1.
33. Ibid., vol.13, p.302.
34. Ibid., vol.13, p.246.
35. al-Dhahabī, Tadhkirat al-Huffāz, vol.4, p.251; al-Subkī, Tabaqāt, vol.5, p.49.
36. Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, op.cit., folio 6^b; Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.267.
37. Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, op.cit., folio 6^b.
38. al-Dhahabī, Tadhkirat al-Huffāz, vol.4, p.251; al-Nu^caymī, op.cit., vol.1, p.605.
39. Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, op.cit., folios 6^a-7^b; Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.267.
40. al-Nu^caymī, op.cit., vol.1, p.24.
41. Wüstenfeld, Heinrich Ferdinand, Über das Leben und die Schriften des Scheich Abū Zakariyā Jahjā al-Nawawī, Göttingen, 1849, p.35.
42. al-Nu^caymī, op.cit., vol.1, pp.19-20.
43. Coulson, op.cit., p.241.
44. Jean-Louis Michon, 'Religious Institutions' in The Islamic City, ed. R. B. Serjeant, Paris, 1980, p.17.
45. Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, op.cit., folio 11^a.
46. al-Subkī, Mu^cīd, pp.159-60.
47. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.279; al-Nu^caymī, op.cit., vol.1, pp.161 and 253.
48. Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, op.cit., folio 8^a.
49. Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, op.cit., folios 10^a-10^b; Wüstenfeld, op.cit., pp.46-56.
50. al-Subkī, Tabaqāt, vol.6, p.143.

51. Ibid., vol.6, pp.251-67.
52. Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folio 9^b.
53. Ibid., folio 13^b.
54. Ibid., folios 14^a-14^b.
55. al-Dhahabī, Tadhkirat al-Huffāz, vol.4, p.254.
56. al-Subkī, Tabaqāt, vol.5, p.84.
57. Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folio 16^b.
58. al-Dīnārī, al-Duwaydārī and Kātim al-Sirr, Sīrat al-Zāhir Baybars, Cairo, 1908, vol.9, part 41, p.40.
59. Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folio 11^a.
60. Ibid., folio 2^b.
61. Ibid., folio 3^a.
62. Ibid., folio 11^b.
63. Ibid., folio 41^a.
64. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, Tadrib al-Rāwī, Cairo, 1972, vol.1, p.62.
65. Ibn Kathīr, Ikhtisār ^cUlūm al-Ḥadīth, Cairo, 1936, p.6.
66. Suyūṭī, Tadrib, vol.1, p.63.
67. Nawawī, Taqrib, vol.1, p.63.
68. Ibid., vol.1, p.153.
69. Guillaume, The Traditions of Islam, p.182.
70. Suyūṭī, Tadrib, vol.1, pp.153-7.
71. Guillaume, The Traditions of Islam, p.88.
72. Suyūṭī, Tadrib, vol.1, p.158.
73. Ibid., vol.1, p.179.
74. Nawawī, Taqrib, vol.1, p.75; cf., Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on this in Chap.6, p.183.
75. Nawawī, Taqrib, vol.1, p.298.
76. Nawawī, Fatawā al-Imām al-Nawawī, Beirut, 1982, p.54; Goldziher, op.cit., vol.2, pp.145-6.

77. Nawawī, al-Adhkār, Damascus, 1983, p.38.
78. See Chap.6, pp.184-5.
79. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī, Qawā'id al-Taḥdīth min Funūn al-Ḥadīth, Damascus, 1935, pp.94-5.
80. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, op.cit., p.162.
81. al-Qāsimī, op.cit., p.94; al-Sakhāwī, M. b. °A, Fath al-Mughīth, Cairo, 1968, p.268.
82. al-Qāsimī, op.cit., p.94.
83. Nawawī, al-Majmū'c: Sharḥ al-Muhadhdhab, Cairo, 1925-9, vol.1, p.59.
84. Muḥammad Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Tāj al-°Arūs, Beirut, 1965-, vol.7, p.344.
85. Suyūṭī, Tadrib, vol.1, p.195.
86. Nawawī, al-Majmū'c, vol.1, p.60.
87. Nawawī, Taqrib, vol.1, p.207.
88. Ibid., vol.1, p.211.
89. Nawawī, al-Majmū'c, vol.1, p.60.
90. Mālik b. Anas, al-Muwatṭā', Beirut, 1979, p.10.
91. Nawawī, al-Majmū'c, vol.1, pp.60-1.
92. Ibid., vol.1, p.61.
93. Nawawī, Taqrib, vol.1, p.171.
94. Ibid., vol.1, p.105.
95. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.5, p.95.
96. Ibid., vol.4, pp.446-7.
97. Ibid., vol.2, pp.166-7.
98. See Chap.2, p.50.
99. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.4, p.178.
100. Ibid., vol.4, pp.402-5.
101. Ibid., vol.7, p.6; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.3, pp.1515-6.
102. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.2289; Graham, op.cit., p.125.
103. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.2289; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, English, vol.4,

p.1538.

104. ^cAbd al-Ra'uf al-Manāwī, Kunūz al-Haqā'iq, Cairo, n.d., vol.1, p.127; ^cAbd al-Ra'uf al-Manāwī, al-Taysīr bi Sharḥ al-Jāmi^c al-Ṣaghīr, vol.1, p.312.
105. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.5, p.94; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.3, pp.1388-9.
106. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.5, pp.494-503; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, pp.2120-8.
107. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.355.
108. Ibid., vol.4, p.327.
109. Nawawī, al-Tarkḥīṣ bi'l-Qiyām li Dhawī al-Fadl wa'l-Maziyya min Ahl al-Islām, Damascus, 1982, p.45.
110. Mālik b. Anas, al-Muwattā', English translation by ^cĀ'isha ^cAbd al-Raḥmān and Ya^cqūb Johnson, University Press, Cambridge, 1982, p.253; Mālik b. Anas, al-Muwattā', p.450.
111. Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.3, p.985.
112. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.7, p.523; Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.3, p.981.
113. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.8, p.29; Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.3, p.984.
114. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.8, p.30; Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.358; Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.3, p.984.
115. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.358; Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.3, p.984.
116. Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.2, p.483.
117. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.142.

Chapter (5)

Nawawī

Interpretation of Hadīth

5.1. Introduction

5.1.1. The influence of Ṣūfism on al-Nawawī's personality

Many incidents in al-Nawawī's life affirm the great influence of Ṣūfism upon his beliefs. In addition to the one which is mentioned in Nawawī's biography,¹ other two incidents, both of which were reported by Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār directly from al-Nawawī, serve to affirm this point. The first incident was reported to Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār by al-Nawawī as follows:

"Once I was severely ill at the Rawāḥiyya College. Then, however, one night, while my father and some of our relatives were sleeping at my side, I felt healthy and lively. Thus, I was filled with an earnest desire for the remembrance of God (dhikr). So, I started repeating the formula subḥān Allāh (glory be to God). While I was in that state,...all of a sudden I saw a handsome shaykh performing wuḍūʾ (ritual ablution before worship) on the brink of the water basin.² The time was then almost midnight. When that shaykh finished his wuḍūʾ he came to me and said, 'O my son, do not remember God and disturb your father, relatives and the residents of this college.' So, I said, 'Who are you?' The shaykh replied, 'I am a sincere adviser to you, and let me be whoever I may be.' Thus, it came to my mind that it was the Devil (Iblīs), and I said, 'God save me from the Devil.' Then I raised my voice with the formula 'Glory be to God.' Consequently, the man turned away and walked towards the college's gate. Then I checked the gate but then I found it locked, I also searched the college but I did not find any stranger in it."³

This incident may suit the purposes of some of the critics of Ṣūfism. For instance, in his Talbīs Iblīs, which specifies the means by which the devil deludes some of the Ṣūfīs, Ibn al-Jawzī (d.597/1200) makes it clear that the more ignorant we are, the more power the devil obtains over us.⁴

The second incident occurred, as Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār states, about two months before al-Nawawī's death. The incident is reported by the former as follows:

"I was sitting with the shaykh (Nawawī), when he said to me, 'I was given

the permission to journey.' So, I said, 'How were you permitted?' He said, 'I was sitting here -in his residence at the Rawāḥiyya- when a person passed by in the air...and said to me, 'Get ready and visit Jerusalem.' Then he (Nawawī) said to me, 'Let us go and say farewell to our friends.'⁵

Ibn al-^ḥAttār further relates that first he took Nawawī's speech to mean an ordinary journey, but later on (when Nawawī died) he realised that Nawawī meant the real journey (death).⁶

It is said that Nawawī used to burst into tears when he practised dhikr in the night, and to recite while being in this state the following verse, "Verily these tears of ecstasy are slipping from my eyelids for the sake of Laylā; otherwise they would have been too much waste."⁷

The influence of Ṣūfism on Nawawī's personality resulted in a spiritual side to which the Ṣūfī circles owe the following works: 1. al-Adhkār, which is a collection of prayers associated with various aspects of Muslim life. As an introduction to the work Nawawī gives a brief discussion of dhikr from the juristic point of view. 2. Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn. 3. al-Tarkhīṣ bi'l-Qiyām li dhawī al-Faḍl wa'l-Maziyya min Ahl al-Islām. 4. Hizb al-Nawawī, which is a special prayer formula which is attributed to Nawawī. It is worthy of note that this Hizb constitutes a part of the awrād (litany) of a Ṣūfī brotherhood called the Sammaniyya and is centred in Sudan. The Hizb is printed alongside some other prayers in a book called Jāmi^ḥ al-Awrād al-Sammaniyya. 5. al-Maqāṣid, in which Nawawī discusses the basics of the affirmation of God's unity (tawḥīd), religious observances (ʿibādāt) and Ṣūfism. 6. al-Arba^ʿīn al-Nawawiyya wa Sharḥuhā, in which "all three specialities of Nawawī, fiqh, ḥadīth, and spirituality are abundantly in evidence".⁸ 7. Bustān al-ʿĀrifīn fi'l-Zuhd wa'l-Taṣawwuf.

5.1.2. The question of Nawawī's Ṣūfī master

Many of Nawawī's biographers state that Nawawī's Ṣūfī master was Yāsīn al-Muzīn, or Yāsīn al-Maghribī, or Yāsīn al-Marākishī (d.687/1288). Among those who state this are: 1. al-Yāfi^ʿī (d.768/1367) in his Mir'āt al-Janān.⁹ 2. Tāj

al-Dīn al-Subkī.¹⁰ 3. ʿAbd al-Raʿūf al-Manāwī (d.1031/1631).¹¹ 4. Ibn al-ʿImād (d.1089/1678).¹² 5. al-Jāmī (d.898/1497) in his Nafahāt al-Uns.¹³

According to al-Yāfiʿī, shortly before Nawawī's death al-Marākishī ordered Nawawī to return the books that he had on loan to their owners and to go back to Nawā. Yāfiʿī claims that Nawawī did what al-Marākishī ordered him to do, and died shortly after this at his house in Nawā.¹⁴

So far, the earliest biographer to claim that Yāsīn al-Marākishī was Nawawī's Ṣūfī master was al-Yāfiʿī, from whom the other biographers have probably quoted this piece of information. But there are reasons to make us reject Yāfiʿī's claim. These may be demonstrated as follows:

1. Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār was the closest companion and disciple of al-Nawawī. The former's biographical work on the latter is the first and the most detailed one. Though Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār mentions al-Marākishī's name in the preceding work, he does not tell us that al-Marākishī is Nawawī's Ṣūfī master. It is unlikely that Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār would mention al-Marākishī's name without telling us this important piece of information about the latter.
2. The order which is said to have been given to Nawawī shortly before his death, and is ascribed by al-Yāfiʿī to al-Marākishī, is also reported by Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār. Nevertheless, Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār does not ascribe the order to al-Marākishī, but he says that the order was given to al-Nawawī by an unspecified righteous person (baʿḍ al-ṣāliḥīn). Again, it is unlikely that Ibn al-ʿAṭṭār would mention this incident and attribute it to an unspecified pious person if it referred to Nawawī's Ṣūfī master.
3. The biographical sources which mention al-Marākishī do not depict him as a Ṣūfī master. Yāfiʿī himself seems to have realised this point. Accordingly, at a later stage of his work Yāfiʿī states that al-Marākishī should be honoured, glorified, venerated, and called high-minded, because Nawawī used to visit him, to seek his blessings, and to act as a pupil in his presence. Furthermore, Yāfiʿī criticises al-Dhahabī, who is claimed by the former to have said the following about al-Marākishī, "Yāsīn al-Maghribī, the black cupper (al-ḥajjām al-aswad) was

a surgeon. Nawawī used to visit him and act as a pupil in his presence." Yāfi'ī says that Dhahabī's terms do not become men of Nawawī's and Marākishī's status.¹⁵ This indicates that the information which Yāfi'ī gives about al-Marākishī is the former's own opinion, the basis of which is the expression that Nawawī used to visit al-Marākishī and act as a pupil in his presence, which does not necessarily mean that Marākishī was Nawawī's Ṣūfī master.

4. Neither in his report that Nawawī used to imitate a Ṣūfī master called Yāsīn al-Muzīn, nor in his statement that al-Marākishī ordered Nawawī, shortly before the latter's death, to return the books that he had on loan to their owners, does Yāfi'ī indicate the definite source from which he received this information. In the first report Yāfi'ī says, "It is widely known".¹⁶ In the second one he says, "I was told by some Syrian scholars".¹⁷ In both cases the source is indefinite. Thus, the authenticity of both reports remains to be questioned.

5. al-Marākishī is said to have been a cupper and a surgeon, and it has already been said that Nawawī's health suffered greatly all through his life. Accordingly, Nawawī's visits to al-Marākishī might have been for the purpose of medical treatment.

6. A statement of al-Nawawī in his Bustān al-ʿArifīn makes it even more unlikely that al-Marākishī is Nawawī's Ṣūfī master. The statement is made in connection with a report in which Nawawī relates an incident which is alleged to have happened to the famous Ṣūfī master, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī. In this report Nawawī says:

"I saw in the handwriting of al-Shaykh (the master), in many places a report in which he says, 'I heard from al-Ḥāfiz Zayn al-Dīn (d.663/1265) twice; the last time on Wednesday the third of Ramaḍān 657 A.H. Zayn al-Dīn said, 'Once the great shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī gave a sermon in Damascus. On this occasion verses of the Qur'ān were recited...As a result, al-Suhrawardī fell into an ecstasy (tawājad), and took off his cloaks (athwābahu). Jamāl al-Dīn (d.636/1238) bought these cloaks for five hundred dirhams for the sake of the blessings it would bring (li'l-tabarruk)'. Nawawī adds: Suhrawardī (may Allāh bless him) spent all his life in ṣalāt

(ritual worship), qirā'a (recitation of the Qur'ān), and dhikr. Our shaykh (may Allāh bless him) was invested with the khirqā from this Suhrawardī. The former accompanied the latter for a long period at the ribāṭ in Baghdad."¹⁸

Then Nawawī gives the lineage of a shaykh who seems to be the same shaykh who was invested with the khirqā from al-Suhrawardī (d.632/1234). In this statement Nawawī says, "I heard from our director (shaykhinā) and master (sayyidinā), the righteous gnostic leader (al-imām al-ṣāliḥ al-ʿarīf), the greatest Ṣūfī shaykh of his time (baqiyyat shuyūkh al-tarīqa), Sharaf al-Dīn Abū Ismāʿīl Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Sarī..."¹⁹ Nawawī says that this is the lineage of his shaykh as dictated to him by the shaykh himself at the Rawāḥiyya College in Damascus in 659/1261.²⁰

Investigation into the biographical works reveals that a Ṣūfī master with a similar name to the one mentioned by Nawawī, who was invested with the Ṣūfī khirqā from al-Suhrawardī, transmitted Ṣūfī knowledge in Damascus, and was a contemporary of al-Nawawī. Apart from the titles and epithets the name given to this man is Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm (614/1216-694/1296), as is mentioned in the biographical works, and Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm as is mentioned by Nawawī. Ibn al-ʿImād says about this Ṣūfī master:

"This shaykh was good in the 'constant supervision of the disciples' (ḥasan al-tarbiya li'l-murīdīn), and he himself was invested with the khirqā from al-Suhrawardī."²¹

An identical statement is made by al-Yāfiʿī about the same shaykh.²²

It is known that there are two Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardīs in Ṣūfī circles. Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm or Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm, who was invested with the khirqā from Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī, lived between 614-694 A.H. Accordingly, the Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī mentioned here should be Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar b. ʿAbd Allāh, the author of ʿAwārif al-Maʿarīf, who lived between 539/1145-632/1234.²³

From the preceding it would appear that Nawawī may have belonged to the

Suhrawardiyya Ṣūfī brotherhood. In addition to the preceding argument, the severe life which Nawawī is reported to have led,²⁴ and the nature of Nawawī's Ṣūfism, which is mainly ethical, supports our claim that Nawawī may have belonged to the Suhrawardiyya, as the founder of this Ṣūfī brotherhood is known to be respectable,²⁵ and its members are "known for their severity".²⁶

5.2. Nawawī's use of ḥadīth in presenting his views on particular doctrines of Ṣūfism

5.2.1. The Friends of God and the karāmāt ("the miraculous graces"²⁷, or charisms) performed by them

Speaking about the karāmāt in Bustān al-ʿĀrifīn Nawawī says:

"Be it known to you that the doctrine of the adherents of the truth (ahl al-ḥaqq) is the assertion of the miraculous graces of God's Friends, and that these miraculous graces existed and will continue to exist in all ages. This can be demonstrated by rational explanation and quotations from the Qur'ān and the ḥadīth. As for the rational explanation, the karāmāt of the Friends of God can occur, and their occurrence does not abolish any of the foundations of the religion (uṣūl al-dīn). Thus, it is obligatory to ascribe to God the omnipotence of having created the karāmāt, and what is potential can surely come into existence."²⁸

A similar justification for the karāmāt of God's Friend's is given by al-Nabahānī who says in this connection:

"If the occurrence of the karāmāt is considered impossible, this could be either because God is not capable of creating them, or because the believer is not worthy of it (the miraculous grace). The first claim is a slander against the omnipotence of God, which is infidelity (kufr)."²⁹

From the ḥadīth Nawawī quotes the following examples to argue for his opinion on the karāmāt:

1. Anas b. Mālīk is reported to have said, "Two men (Usayd b. Ḥudayr and ʿAbbād b. Bishr, the prophet's companions) left the prophet on a very dark night. Suddenly a light came in front of them, and when they separated, the light also separated along with them."³⁰

2. Ibn ʿUmar is reported to have quoted the prophet as saying, "Once three persons were travelling, and suddenly it started raining and they took shelter in a cave. The entrance of the cave got closed (by a rock) while they were inside. They said to each other, 'O you! nothing can save you except the truth, so each of you should ask Allāh's help by referring to such a deed as he thinks he did sincerely...(they did so) hence, the rock shifted...and they came out.'"³¹
3. Abū Hurayra's report in which the story of a certain man called Jurayj who is said to have experienced a certain charism is narrated.³²
4. The tradition which is quoted by Ibn ʿArabī and Ibn Taymiyya for the same purpose, in which the prophet is reported to have said that ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb could divine the unknown.³³
5. The daughter of al-Ḥārith is reported to have said, "By Allāh, I never saw a prisoner better than Khubayb (al-Anṣārī, the prophet's companion). By Allāh, one day I saw him eating of a bunch of grapes in his hand while he was chained in irons, and there was no fruit at that time in Mecca." It is reported that the daughter of al-Ḥārith used to say, "It was a boon Allāh bestowed upon Khubayb."³⁴

Nawawī also refers to the story of Moses and Khadīr which is referred to in both the Qurʾān and ḥadīth.³⁵ However, he makes it clear that in his opinion, Khadīr is a prophet and not a Friend of God. Thus, this story cannot be used to argue for the karāmāt.³⁶

Nawawī's opinion on the actions which occur from the Friends of God and seem to be contrary to Sharīʿa law, is worthy of note. His opinion is that one should try to find explanations for these actions. In Bustān al-ʿĀrifīn Nawawī relates a story involving Abu'l-Khayr al-Tīnātī (d.343/955), who is said to have experienced many karāmāt.³⁷ In this story Ibrāhīm al-Ruqī (n.d.) is reported to have journeyed to visit Abu'l-Khayr, and performed the prayer at sunset (ṣalāt al-maghrib) with him. During this prayer it is said that Abu'l-Khayr failed to recite al-Fātiḥa (the first chapter of the Qurʾān) properly. Consequently, Ibrāhīm is reported to have said that he felt that his journey was useless.³⁸ Commenting on

this incident Nawawī states the following:

"He who ascribes to himself the characteristics of jurists (fuqahā'), while he knows nothing about jurisprudence (fiqh), might imagine that the ritual worship performed by Abu'l-Khayr was invalid (fāsida). This indicates the ignorance and the stupidity of the one who thinks in this way. It is also recklessness of him to think ill of the Friends of God. The person who understands should beware of the risk that comes from that way of thinking, nay, it is his duty to learn the wit and wisdom hidden in the actions of the Friends of God from those who do understand them, if he does not. Every matter of this kind that ignorant people mistakenly consider inconsistent (with the Shari'ca) is not so. Not only that but an explanation of this type of actions of the Friends of God should be sought."³⁹

Then Nawawī gives a justification for Abu'l-Khayr's action. It consists of three points: 1. Abu'l-Khayr might have made a grammatical mistake, which does not cause a ritual prayer to be invalid. 2. He might have been caused to make this grammatical mistake because of a defect in his tongue. 3. Even if Abu'l-Khayr had no excuse for his failure to perform the prayer in accordance with the religious custom, the recitation of the first chapter of the Qur'ān is not compulsory, according to Abū Ḥanīfa and others, and this Friend of God is not obliged to follow the opinion of those who think that the recitation of the first chapter is compulsory.⁴⁰

An opinion which is to a certain extent equivalent to Nawawī's opinion on the matter in hand, is presented in a passage attributed to Ibn 'Arabi. In this passage Ibn 'Arabi is reported to have said:

"If we see in this community (umma) a person who claims that he has attained the stage of calling to God on the basis of an insight knowledge (maqām al-du'ā' ilā Allāh 'alā baṣīra), while he violates some of the rules of canonical conduct, and claims that he has a special pardon to act in such a way, we should not pay attention to him, and he is neither a leader nor in the right, even if he manifests overwhelming charisms. But this judgement is based on the condition that this person still has the conscious effort ('aql al-taklīf). So, if this person is overtaken by a state that causes him to be unobliged to observe the precepts of religion (mā yukhrijuhu 'an 'aql al-taklīf), as in the case of the enraptured people (al-majādhīb) and the people in mystical states (arbab al-ahwāl), his state should be accorded to him, but

he should not be imitated, even though he may be one of the blessed...this case is not understood by the majority of mystics, so just imagine how much more difficulty the common jurists have in understanding it!"⁴¹

When we compare Nawawī's opinion on the matter in hand with that of Ibn ʿArabī, we find that Nawawī's opinion is even more extreme than that of Ibn ʿArabī: while Ibn ʿArabī restricts the excuse to the enraptured and people in mystical states, Nawawī generalises it. Moreover, Ibn ʿArabī's opinion is made in connection with the violations of the rules of conduct (ādāb al-Sharīʿa), while Nawawī's statement is made in connection with a violation of the rules of one of the pillars of Islam, namely, the ritual prayer. Nawawī's argument concerning Abu'l-Khayr's case could be convincing, but his claim that whenever a Friend of God carries out an action in which he violates Shariʿa law there should be either an explanation for it, or a hidden wisdom in it, is a claim for which he has not furnished a proof, whether from the Qur'ān or from the ḥadīth. Thereby, it cannot be taken for granted. Some of the contemporary Ṣūfīs argue that the story of Moses and his anonymous travelling companion, identified in Islamic tradition with Khadīr, serves as an argument for Nawawī's opinion. The story is narrated in both the Qur'ān and the canonical collections of ḥadīth. In this story Khadīr carries out a number of outrageous actions, all of which turn to be based on good reasons. As Khadīr, in the opinion of the majority of Muslim scholars, is a prophet and not a Friend of God, and his actions are supposed to have taken place before Islam (i.e., before Shariʿa law was established) his story cannot serve as an argument in this case.

5.2.2. Sincerity and truthfulness

One of the topics about which Nawawī speaks in many of his works is sincerity and truthfulness (al-ikhlaṣ wa'l-ṣidq). Many scholars before Nawawī wrote on this subject, but perhaps he presents the existing ideas in new simple forms, which makes them easier to understand.

Like his predecessors, Nawawī starts the discussion under this topic by

presenting the Qur'ānic and ḥadīth texts in which ikhḥlās and ṣidq are referred to. From the ḥadīth he quotes the famous tradition which says, "Actions are but by intention and every person will have but that which he intended."⁴²

In his commentary on this ḥadīth Nawawī says:

"This tradition indicates that the intention is the criterion by which deeds are measured for value. Wherever the intention is good, deeds are valid, wherever it is not, deeds are invalid. Deeds which are based on a good intention have three states (ahwāl): 1. To act because of fear of God (khawfan min Allāh), which is the worship of slaves (ʿibādat al-ʿabīd). 2. To worship God seeking his reward and heaven (li talab al-janna wa'l-thawāb), and this is the worship of merchants (ʿibādat al-tujjār). 3. To worship God in order to show one's shame of him (ḥayā'an min Allāh), to perform one's duties as a servant of God (ta'diya li ḥaqq al-ʿubūdiyya) and to thank God for his mercy. Nevertheless, the worshipper feels that his duties towards God are not well performed, and he still hesitates, wondering whether his deeds are accepted by God or not. This is the worship of nobles (ʿibādat al-aḥrār), to which the messenger of God pointed out in his reply to ʿĀ'isha's question when she saw that he had worshipped God in the night till his feet were swollen. ʿĀ'isha said, 'Oh messenger of God, should you do this when God has already granted you pardon for all your misdeeds?' The prophet replied, 'Should not I be a very thankful servant of God?'"⁴³

Nawawī distinguishes the relation between the intention and sincerity by stating that the three states mentioned in his previous statement are concerning the deeds of sincere worshippers (fī ḥaqq al-mukhlisīn).⁴⁴ Thus, it can be said that according to Nawawī the good intention is the criterion of the deeds of sincere worshippers; nevertheless, sincere worshippers themselves are on three levels according to their intentions. Those who base their deeds on the shame of God (al-ḥayā' min Allāh) occupy the highest level, while the worshippers who act in the hope of gaining God's reward (raja') are better than those who worship God because of fear (khawf). In this concept it is clear that Nawawī is influenced by Ṣūfīs' views, for example that of al-Ghazālī (d.505/1111), who says that the devotion (ʿibāda) which is accompanied with hope is better than that which is accompanied with fear, because hope creates love while fear creates desperation

(ghunūt).⁴⁵

From all that is mentioned above it is understood that deeds which are based on sincerity or good intention designate absolute devotion to God.

On the other hand, deeds in which the worshipper seeks both this world and the hereafter (li talab al-dunyā wa'l-ākhirā) are considered valueless by Nawawī. In other words, they are considered shirk (polytheism or every kind of worship by which God is not exclusively meant).⁴⁶ To support this opinion Nawawī quotes the tradition in which God speaks in the first person and says, "I am the associate most free to dispense with association. As for him who carries out an action in which he has someone other than me participate, with it (the action) I have nothing to do."⁴⁷ On this point Nawawī is also influenced by the views of some Ṣūfīs, such as al-Junayd (d.298/910) and al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī (d.243/857) who says on the meaning of sincerity:

"Sincerity is to worship God for the purpose of coming nearer to him but not for anything else."⁴⁸

al-Junayd is reported to have said, "Sincerity is that whereby God is desired, whatever the act may be."⁴⁹

In this context, ikhlās is mainly opposed to the concept of riyā' (ostentation), which is condemned in both the Qur'ān and the ḥadīth. From ḥadīth Nawawī quotes the tradition in which the prophet is reported to have said, "If anyone wants to have his deeds publicised, Allāh will publicise (his humiliation). And if anyone makes a hypocritical display (of his deeds) Allāh will make a display of him."⁵⁰ Ostentation is described by Nawawī as follows:

"Ostentation falls into two categories: (a) To worship God in order to obtain admiration from people, (b) to worship God in order to come nearer to him and to obtain admiration from people, both of which cause deeds to be valueless."⁵¹

In spite of the fact that riyā' is opposed to ikhlās, to experience riyā' is regarded as a major part in the way to achieve ikhlās. To explain this Nawawī says

in his Bustān al-ʿĀrifīn:

"This means that no one is capable to understand riyā' and to recognise its concealed nature, except the worshipper who seeks sincerity. For this purpose he makes every conceivable effort to understand the reality of riyā' so that he can understand the reality of ikhlāṣ."⁵²

It is worthy of note that Nawawī supports his opinion on this matter by a statement attributed to the famous mystic, Abū Yazīd al-Bastāmī (d.261/873), in which Abū Yazīd is reported to have said:

"For twelve years I was the blacksmith of my soul (haddād nafsi), for five years I was the mirror of my heart (mir'āt qalbī), and for another year I was examining them (his soul and heart), then all of a sudden I saw a clear girdle (zunnār) in my heart, so I spent twelve years cutting it off. Then all of a sudden I saw a clear girdle in my inner, thus, I spent five years cutting it off, (look how I purify myself!), then the universe was revealed to me (fa kushif li). I looked to the creatures, but then I saw them lifeless, and I magnified the Lord four times."⁵³

In his comment on the preceding statement of Abū Yazīd Nawawī mentions that Abū Yazīd is unique of his kind in the Ṣūfī path; therefore, his experience is sufficient to show the hiddenness of riyā'. Moreover, Nawawī adds that Abū Yazīd's statement "I looked to the creatures, but then I saw them lifeless" is extremely precious and there is no equivalent to it except in the sayings of the prophet. Then Nawawī explains Abū Yazīd's statement as follows:

"This means that Abū Yazīd did all in his power to purify his lower soul until his heart was illuminated and he took control of himself. As a result, when Abū Yazīd looked at the people they were lifeless, in the sense that they were as good as nothing, because they cannot help or harm, they cannot give or take..., consequently, one should not refrain from worshipping God because of them, and should not worship God to be praised by them."⁵⁴

In spite of the fact that ikhlāṣ is identified as the absolute devotion to God, it is still not sufficient for this purpose unless it is accompanied with ṣidq (truthfulness). Many attempts were made to distinguish between ṣidq and ikhlāṣ. Nevertheless, it remains a difficult task to find out a prescribed difference between

the two of them. The following are examples of the various views on this point:

Abū ʿAlī al-Daqqāq (d.1015/1606 or 1021/1612) says, "sincerity is to keep free from the wish to be seen (mulāḥaẓat al-khalq), and truthfulness is to be purified of self-complacency (mutālaʿat al-nafs)."⁵⁵

But when we compare Daqqāq's definition with a definition of ikhḷāṣ made by ʿAbd Allāh al-Harawī al-Anṣārī (d.481/1089), we find that the two definitions are contradictory. On the definition of ikhḷāṣ Harawī says, "ikhḷāṣ is three levels. The first is the purification of deeds from self-complacency (ikhraj ru'yat al-ʿamal min al-ʿamal)."⁵⁶ This corresponds to the definition of ṣidq as presented by al-Daqqāq.

Nawawī presents the difference between sincerity and truthfulness as follows:

"Truthfulness is achieved with the accomplishment of all the stages (al-maqāmāt) and the states (al-aḥwāl) on the mystical path. Even sincerity lacks truthfulness, whereas truthfulness does not lack anything. This is due to the fact that sincerity designates the pure intention to worship God -for example one may perform the ritual prayer (ṣalāt) because he purely intends to worship God, but perhaps his heart is not in the presence of God, while truthfulness designates the pure intention to worship God together with the presence of the heart. So, every truthful worshipper is a sincere one, but not every sincere worshipper is a truthful one. And this is the concept of the unitedness (al-ittiṣāl) and the separation (al-infiṣāl). In other words, this is the signification of being free from all 'subsidiary thoughts' (al-takhallī ʿammā siwā Allāh) and finding great pleasure in the presence of God (al-taḥallī bi'l-ḥudūr bi Allāh)."⁵⁷

Unlike Nawawī who says that "sincerity lacks truthfulness, whereas truthfulness does not lack anything", Abū Saʿīd al-Kharraz (d.probably 268/899) says in his work on truthfulness, "I said to a certain learned man,⁵⁸ 'inform me concerning truthfulness, its nature and meaning, as well as how it may be practised, that I may be acquainted with it'. He replied, 'Truthfulness is a word embracing and entering into all meanings.'"⁵⁹ In another place of the preceding work Kharraz says, "Sincerity is not complete, save there be truthfulness therein

and patience thereover; patience is not complete, save there be truthfulness therein and sincerity therein; truthfulness is not complete, save there be patience thereover and sincerity therein."⁶⁰

But at the end of his book Kharrāz says:

"This, then, is another answer to thy question, 'does a man attain a state in which he no longer seeks to attain truthfulness?' This is the sign of those who do attain: do thou therefore understand it. Dost thou not know, disciple, that godliness, abstinence, patience, trust, fear, hope, respect, shame, love, yearning, intimacy, truthfulness and sincerity in all stations, every fair and lovely characteristic- all these are stations dwelt in by those who work for God, from which they depart to journey to others until they have attained their desire, being near to their master? Then what hast thou to do with recollecting any station in which thou hast dwelt, until such time as it brought thee to thy goal, if thou hast now attained, and obtained some part of thy quest?"⁶¹

This indicates that at the very moment when the "wayfarer" on the Ṣūfī path (al-sālik) attains truthfulness in all the stations, he reaches his goal, which is proximity to God, and this is similar to the meaning of Nawawī's statement, "Truthfulness does not lack anything". In the light of this evidence there will be only one way to understand Kharrāz's first statement in which he says, "Truthfulness is not complete, save there be patience thereover and sincerity therein". This way will be that truthfulness in every station is not achieved unless the wayfarer is sincere in this station and patient with it. Accordingly, Kharrāz's whole theory on truthfulness implies that truthfulness as a whole is not terminated unless it is achieved in all the stations, and truthfulness in every station is not achieved unless the wayfarer is sincere in this station and patient with it. When truthfulness is attained in all the stations the worshipper reaches his goal (i.e. proximity to God).

Therefore, it can be said that the only difference between Kharrāz and Nawawī on this concept is that Kharrāz presents the concept of truthfulness in an exhaustive manner, while Nawawī presents it in a shortened, direct way.

In spite of the fact that the achievement of truthfulness in all the stations is

regarded as the sign of wuṣūl (arrival at God, unity) and that the wāṣil (the one who attains this goal) is no longer seeking it, truthfulness, as all other good characteristics, becomes a part of the worshipper's nature, though the consciousness of truthfulness itself disappears from the worshipper's heart. Nevertheless, the truthful worshipper does not stay in one state. Abu'l-Qasim al-Junayd (d.298/910) says in this connection, "The truthful worshipper changes his performance forty times a day, whereas the person guilty of hypocrisy remains in one state for forty years."⁶²

Commenting on Junayd's statement, Nawawī says:

"This means that the truthful worshipper changes his performance to whatever appears to him to be right. Accordingly, if he sees the lawful merit in doing a specific thing he does it even if this new matter contradicts what he used to do, and if another thing appears to be more important according to his religious knowledge, he leaves the matter to which he has changed to the new one, and still he keeps changing his performance to the best, so that in one day he might be in a hundred or thousand states (aḥwāl) or even more, according to his ability in 'mystical intuitive knowledge' (maʿārif), and according to the appearance of intricacies (daqā'iq) and the touches of grace (laṭā'if)."⁶³

One of the sayings which Nawawī quotes in the context of his discussion on sincerity and truthfulness is the one in which it is said, "Whoever devotes himself solely to God for forty days (man akhlaṣ li Allāh arbaʿīn yawm), fountains of wisdom shall pour forth from his heart upon his tongue." Unlike Ibn ʿArabī who often quotes this saying and refers to it as a prophetic one, Nawawī states that it is a saying of Makhūl.⁶⁴

5.2.3. Marriage

It is known that Nawawī died unmarried. None of Nawawī's biographers give us any clear opinion on this point. But some of them put this piece of information in a way that gives the impression that this is due to Nawawī's renunciation. For example Ibn Shuhba (d.851/1447) says in this connection:

"Throughout the whole day, Nawawī did not use to eat or to drink except a meal in the late evening and a drink at the time before daybreak,⁶⁵ and he did not marry."⁶⁶

The other biographers avoid discussing this point by stating that Nawawī was "noble and chaste (sayyidan wa ḥaṣūran)".⁶⁷ This expression is typical of the one used in the Qur'ān in the description of the prophet Yaḥyā, in which the Qur'ān says, "God gives thee glad tidings of Yaḥyā, who shall fulfil the word of Allāh; he will be noble, chaste and a prophet from among the righteous (sayyidan wa ḥaṣūran wa nabiyyan min al-ṣāliḥīn)".⁶⁸

When the meaning of the term ḥaṣūr is traced in the interpretations of the Qur'ān we find that there is a difference of opinion about it. On the one hand, a group of scholars, among whom are two companions of the prophet, namely, Ibn ʿAbbās and Ibn Masʿūd, are reported to have said that the term ḥaṣūr is an active participle which designates the person who abstains from women. On the other hand, the other group says that this term designates the man who is unable to marry or beget children.⁶⁹ Of these two opinions the latter is criticised by the judge ʿIyād (d.544/1150), who says that this is a physical defect which cannot be ascribed to the prophets. ʿIyād suggests that to be a ḥaṣūr means to abstain from women by being given satisfaction from God (bi kifāya min Allāh), but he thinks that it is a higher stage, if the person can marry and perform his duties towards his family without being distracted by this from worshipping God.⁷⁰

An investigation into Nawawī's views about marriage has revealed him to be influenced by some Ṣufī views on this point. In his Majmūʿ, Nawawī quotes many statements against marriage, two of which are attributed to the famous mystics Ibrāhīm b. Adham (d.160/776) and Bishr b. al-Ḥārith al-Ḥafī (d.841). In the first statement Ibrāhīm b. Adham is reported to have said, "He who is concerned with women will not succeed." In the second statement Bishr is reported to have said, "He who does not need women should fear God and not be concerned with them."⁷¹

Nawawī's comment on these statements can be read as follows:

"This is conformable to our doctrine, because our doctrine is that it is recommended for the person who does not need to marry, and the person who does need to marry but cannot support a family, not to marry."⁷²

In the light of this comment, it is probable that Nawawī did not marry, not because of a physical defect, but because of his opinion on marriage.

Marriage is one of the important subjects in Muslim jurisprudence, and it is recommended by many Qur'ānic verses and prophetic sayings. So, if a scholar like Nawawī presents an opinion against marriage, he should furnish a strong proof for this opinion. The only proof that Nawawī gives to support his opinion on this matter is a tradition which says, "The best of all people after the first two centuries (A.H.) is the one who has neither a wife nor children."⁷³

The same tradition is quoted by Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (d.386/996) in support of a similar opinion.⁷⁴

So far, I could not trace this tradition to any of the collections of ḥadīth which Muslims consider canonical. The only collection of traditions in which this one is reported is a work called Kunūz al-Ḥaqā'iq, collected by ʿAbd al-Raʿūf al-Manāwī (d.1031/1622).⁷⁵ Accordingly, this tradition cannot serve as a good proof to argue for Nawawī's opinion on this point. Besides, the concept of refraining from marriage is condemned by many traditions which are reported in the canonical collection of ḥadīth. The following are examples of these traditions:

1. Anas b. Mālik is reported to have said, "Three men came to the prophet's house and asked the prophet's wives how the prophet worshipped Allāh, and when they were informed about that, they considered this worship insufficient for themselves and said, 'How far removed we are from the prophet, as his past and future sins have been forgiven!' Then one of them said, 'I will worship throughout the night.' The other said, 'I will fast throughout the year and will not break my fast.' The third said, 'I will keep away from women and will never marry.' The messenger of God came to them and said, 'Are you the men who said so and so? By Allāh, I am

more submissive to Allāh and more afraid of him than you; yet I fast and break my fast, I do sleep and I also marry women. So, he who does not follow my example is not from me (not one of my followers)."⁷⁶

2. Sa^cd b. Abī Waqqāṣ is reported to have said, "The messenger of God forbade ^cUthmān b. Maz^cūn tabattul (to abstain from marrying and to retire from the world and devote one's life to God), and if he had allowed him (to do that), we would have got ourselves castrated."⁷⁷

According to a prophetic tradition those who cannot support a wife are excused from marrying. In this tradition ^cAbd Allāh b. Mas^cūd is reported to have said that the prophet said, "Young men, those of you who can support a wife should marry, for it keeps you from looking at strange women and preserves you from immorality; but those who cannot should devote themselves to fasting, for it is a means of suppressing sexual desire."⁷⁸ However, this pardon does not mean, as Nawawī says, that those who cannot support a wife are discouraged from marrying. This can be supported by the following quotations from the Qur'ān and ḥadīth:

1. The Qur'ānic verse which says, "Marry those among you who are single, or the virtuous ones among your slaves, male or female: If they are in poverty, God will give them means out of his grace for God encompasseth all, and he knoweth all things." (24:32)

2. It is reported on the authority of Sahl b. Sa^cd al-Sā^cidī that the prophet said to a man who wanted to marry a woman, but had nothing to give her as a dowry (mahr), "How much of the Qur'ān do you know?" The man mentioned a couple of chapters. The prophet said, "Do you know them by heart?" He replied, "Yes." The prophet then said, "Go, I marry her to you for that much of the Qur'ān which you know by heart."⁷⁹

5.2.4. The permissibility of standing up (qiyām), bowing (inhinā') and kneeling down to show respect to others

This is a question that has continued to give rise to much controversy. Ibn Taymiyya gave a prolonged fatwā (juristic opinion) on the permissibility of this practice. Nawawī devoted a comprehensive work, al-Tarkhīṣ bi'l-qiyām li dhawī al-faḍl wa'l-maziyya min ahl al-Islām, to discuss the same question. In our times the Wahhābīs, who disapprove of this practice, often debate upon this practice with the Ṣūfīs who approve of it.

Nawawī's argument on this question is built mainly on the prophetic traditions that relate to it. However, he also supports his opinion on this question with that of al-salaf (predecessors) and with the practice of the Muslim scholars, the righteous, the people of waraʿ (God fearing) and al-zuhhād ("world renouncers").

This argument is categorised into three stages:

A. Traditions which support the permissibility of this practice:

1. Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī is reported to have said, "When the B. Qurayza surrendered, agreeing to have their fate decided by Saʿd b. Muʿādh, God's messenger sent for him and he came on an ass. When he drew near God's messenger said, 'Rise up to your chief.'" In another version it is said that the prophet said, "Rise up to the best amongst you."⁸⁰

Nawawī states that this tradition constitutes a decisive argument for the permissibility of this practice. He adds that the majority of Muslim scholars used it to argue for the permissibility of this practice. Among these scholars he mentions, Abū Dāwūd, compiler of al-Sunan, Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, author of al-Ṣaḥīḥ, Bishr b. al-Ḥārith al-Ḥafī (d.227/841), Abū Muḥammad al-Baghawī (d.516/1122) and the three ḥadīth experts; Abū Bakr al-Bayhaqī (d.458/1065), al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d.463/1070) and Abū Mūsā al-Isbāḥānī (d.581/1185). Nawawī then quotes Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj as having said, "I do not know a tradition other than this one, which is more proper to be used as an argument for the permissibility of a man's standing up to another one. This is standing up to show devoutness (birr) not glorification (taʿzīm)."⁸¹ Commenting on Muslim's

statement, Nawawī says that it is a brief statement in which the whole meaning of the preceding tradition is expressed.⁸²

Ibn Taymiyya is of the opinion that the meaning of this tradition is, when someone comes from a journey it is permissible for others to stand up to meet him.⁸³ However, it is clear from the context that they were ordered to stand up for Sa^cd to show him respect, as he was their leader or the best amongst them.

2. Ka^cb b. Mālīk's report, in which he narrates the story of the battle of Tabūk, in which he failed to take part without any excuse. It is reported that when the prophet returned from this battle Ka^cb came to him, told him that he failed to take part in that battle for no excuse and asked the prophet's forgiveness. In reply to this the prophet is reported to have said, "As regards this man (Ka^cb), he has surely told the truth. So, get up and wait till Allāh decides your case." Later on it is said that the prophet received a revelation by means of which Ka^cb's repentance was accepted, and he rushed off to the prophet's mosque to see him. At the end of this report Ka^cb is reported to have said, "When I entered the mosque, I saw the messenger of Allāh sitting with the people around him. Ṭalḥa b. ^cUbayd Allāh swiftly came to me, shook hands with me and congratulated me. By Allāh, none of the muhājirūn (Emigrants) got up for me except him."⁸⁴

This tradition shows that qiyām was practised in the prophet's presence and he did not forbid it.

3. ^cĀ'isha, the prophet's wife is reported to have said, "I never saw anyone more like God's messenger in gravity, calm deportment, pleasant disposition (one version adding talk and speech) than Fāṭima (the prophet's daughter). When she came in to visit him he got up to welcome her, took her by the hand, kissed her and made her sit where he was sitting; and when he went to visit her she got up to welcome him, took him by the hand, kissed him, and made him sit where she was sitting."⁸⁵

4. ^cUmar b. al-Sā'ib, a successor (tābi^ci), is reported to have said, "One day while the prophet was sitting his foster-father (abūhu min al-ridā^ca) came. The prophet

spread out the border of his garment from one side, and made him sit on it. Then the prophet's foster-mother came. The prophet spread out the border of his garment from the other side, and made her sit on it. Then the prophet's foster-brother came. The prophet stood up for him and made him sit in front of him."⁸⁶

5. Ibn Shihāb, a successor, reported, "Umm Ḥakīm bint al-Ḥārith b. Hishām who was the wife of ʿIkrima b. Abī Jahl became a Muslim on the day of the conquest (of Mecca), and her husband ʿIkrima fled from Islam as far as Yemen. Umm Ḥakīm set out after him until she came to him in Yemen and she called him to Islam and he became a Muslim. He went to the messenger of Allāh, in the year of the conquest. When the messenger of Allāh saw him, he rushed to him in joy and did not bother to put on his cloak until he had made the pledge with him. They were confirmed in their marriage."⁸⁷

The last two traditions are of the mursal type.⁸⁸ Nawawī's justification for quoting them here is that they are supported by the genuine traditions that preceded them. Moreover, the majority of Muslim scholars have issued a juristic opinion relevant to the meaning of these traditions. That is to say, the majority of Muslim scholars are of the opinion that qiyām is permissible.⁸⁹

6. Abū Hurayra is reported to have said, "God's messenger used to sit talking with us in the mosque and when he rose we kept standing till we saw him enter the house of one of his wives."⁹⁰

7. ʿĀ'isha is reported to have said, "Zayd b. Ḥāritha came to Medina when God's messenger was in my house. When he came to him and knocked at the door God's messenger got up and went to him...he then embraced him and kissed him."⁹¹

B. Traditions which are used to argue against the permissibility of qiyām:

1. Anas b. Mālīk is reported to have said, "No one was dearer to them (the companions) than God's messenger, but when they saw him they did not stand up because they knew his dislike of that."⁹² According to Tirmidhī this is a ḥasan (fair), ṣaḥīḥ (genuine) tradition.⁹³

2. It is reported on the authority of Muʿāwiya that he heard the messenger of God

saying, "Let him who likes people to stand up before him come to his place in hell."⁹⁴

3. Abū Umāma is reported to have said, "The messenger of God came out leaning on a stick, and so we stood up to show respect to him. Hence, he said, 'Do not stand up as foreigners (a^cājim) do showing exaltation to one another (yu^cazzim ba^cduhum ba^cd).'"⁹⁵

4. Abū Bakra is reported to have said that the messenger of God said, "No man should get up from where he has been sitting to allow another man to sit in his place, but you should spread out to make room, and God will provide ample room for you."⁹⁶

C. The answer to the claim that the preceding four traditions mean that qiyām is prohibited:

1. The answer to the first tradition consists of two points:

a. The prophet disliked his companions to stand up for him from motives of fear that they might be led from the right course by over-exalting him. Out of the same motives the prophet is reported to have said in another tradition, "Do not exalt me the way Christians did Jesus, son of Mary."⁹⁷

b. The relation between the prophet and his companions was so close and they were so devoted to him that they did not need to stand up for him to show that they respected him.

A more convincing reply to the claim that this tradition serves to argue against the permissibility of qiyām would have been a principle which the ḥadīth experts are agreed on. This is the principle that a tradition which is reported in the negation form (ṣīghat al-nafy) is considered not as strong proof as a tradition which is reported in the affirmation form (ṣīghat al-ithbāt).⁹⁸ That is to say, if a tradition negates the occurrence of a certain act, while another tradition affirms the occurrence of the same act, the latter provides a stronger proof than the former. This is due to the fact that the one who negates the occurrence of this act does this because he did not see it happen, and it is possible that it happened when he was

absent. Since the companion who reported this tradition was negating that the companions practised standing up to show respect to the prophet, while other companions reported traditions which prove the opposite, the former's report cannot be used to argue that qiyām is prohibited.

2. The answer to the second tradition consists of three points:

a. The clear meaning of this tradition is that one should not like others to stand up before him, and that one who likes this deserves great punishment. However, it does not imply that standing up to show respect to others is prohibited. Ibn Taymiyya agrees with al-Nawawī on this point.⁹⁹

b. This tradition is a mudtarib ("a tradition in which a word has become misplaced, added, or suppressed, or suffered any kind of derangement"). The mudtarib is a category of the daʿīf (weak traditions). Accordingly, it cannot be used to constitute a decisive argument.

c. Four well known and respectable Muslim scholars, who are known to be well informed of ḥadīth, are of the opinion that the threat in this tradition applies only to one who likes others to stand up for him from motives of haughtiness (kibr). These scholars are Abū Naṣr Bishr b. al-Ḥārith, Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī, al-Baghawī and Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Isbahānī.¹⁰⁰

3. The answer to the third tradition consists of two points:

a. It is a weak tradition which does not constitute a decisive argument.

b. The word yuʿazzim (exalt) which is used in this tradition provides enough evidence to prove that what is prohibited is to stand up to show exaltation to others, not respect.¹⁰¹

4. The answer to the fourth tradition is:

a. The chain of transmitters on which this tradition is based has an unknown transmitter. Thus it cannot be accepted.

b. This tradition could mean that one should not give up his place in congregational prayer, religious assemblies and the like. These are considered acts of devotion. Thus in these cases one should not give others preference over

himself. It is a different case when worldly desires, for example food and drink, are involved. In these cases the opposite should be done, i.e. one should give others preference over himself.¹⁰²

On the basis of the preceding argument Nawawī reaches the conclusion that standing up to show respect to the righteous is permissible.¹⁰³

Now this practice, i.e., standing up to show respect to the righteous, is closely related to another one which is quite common among the Ṣūfīs. This is bowing (*inhinā'*) or kneeling down and kissing the hand of a Ṣūfī master when greeting him. This practice is condemned by Ibn Taymiyya who quotes the following two prophetic traditions to argue against it:

1. It is reported on the authority of Anas b. Mālīk that a man asked the prophet, "Messenger of God, when one of us meets his Muslim brother should he bow to him?" The prophet replied, "No."¹⁰⁴
2. Abū Hurayra is reported to have reported God's messenger as saying, "If I were to order anyone to prostrate himself before another, I would order a woman to prostrate herself before her husband."¹⁰⁵

It is more likely that what is meant by the last two traditions is that one is not ordered to bow or to kneel down before someone else to show respect. In the first tradition the question was, "Should he bow to him?" If the answer was "yes", the act, i.e. bowing, would be obligatory. Thus the tradition means that bowing is not obligatory, not that it is not permissible. The same argument applies to the second tradition, in which the prophet says, "If I were to order", meaning that he does not order, not that he does not allow.

Moreover, a number of genuine traditions which are reported in the canonical collections demonstrate that bowing or kneeling down when greeting the prophet or when showing respect to him was practised by the companions and the prophet did not disapprove. Examples of these traditions are the following:

1. Ibn ʿUmar is reported to have said, "We humbled ourselves before the prophet and kissed his hand." In another version he is reported to have said, "We kissed

the prophet's hand."¹⁰⁶

2. It is reported that "Zārī^c, who was a member of the deputation of ^cAbd al-Qays, said that when they came to Medina they raced to be the first to dismount and kiss God's messenger's hand and foot."¹⁰⁷

It is obvious that they could not have kissed the prophet's hand without bowing, and that they could not have kissed his foot without kneeling down.

3. Anas b. Mālīk is reported to have said, "The prophet came out after the sun had declined and offered the midday ritual prayer (in congregation). After finishing it, he stood on the pulpit and spoke about the Hour of Resurrection and mentioned that there would happen great events before it. Then he said, 'Whoever wants to ask me any question, may do so, for by Allāh, you will not ask me about anything but I will inform you of its answer as long as I am at this place of mine.' On this the Anṣār wept violently, and Allāh's messenger kept on saying, 'Ask me!' Then a man got up and asked, 'Where will my entrance be, O Allāh's messenger?' He said, 'You will go to Hellfire.' Then ^cAbd Allāh b. Ḥudhayfa (a companion) got up and asked, 'Who is my father, O messenger of Allāh?' The prophet replied, 'Your father is Ḥudhayfa.' The prophet then kept saying (angrily), 'Ask me! Ask me!' ^cUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb then knelt on his knees and said, 'We have accepted Allāh as our Lord, Islam as our religion and Muḥammad as a messenger of Allāh.' The prophet became quiet when ^cUmar said that."¹⁰⁸ This implies that ^cUmar knelt down to show devoutness and obedience to the prophet.

5.3. Notes

1. See Chap.4, p.121.
2. Apparently the water-basin (birka) was one of the facilities of the College.
3. Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, op.cit., folio 4^a.
4. Ibn al-Jawzī, Talbīs Iblīs, ed. Muḥammad al-Dimashqī, Beirut, 1980, p.388.
5. Ibn al-^cAṭṭār, op.cit., folios 11^a-11^b.
6. The author of al-Luma^c, Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d.378/988), devotes a whole chapter to the discussion of the Ṣūfīs' manners in the hour of death. There he cites a number of incidents which may be compared with this one; see Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, Kitāb al-Luma^c, ed. R. A. Nicholson, London, 1963, pp.209-11.
7. al-Yāfi^{cī}, ^cAbd Allāh b. As^cad, Mir'āt al-Janān, Hyderabad, 1338/1920-1, vol.4, p.186.
8. Juynboll, G. H. A., 'Review of al-Nawawī's book al-Arba^{cīn} al-Nawawīyya'. In International Journal of Middle East Studies, vol.17, 1985, p.289.
9. Yāfi^{cī}, op.cit., vol.4, pp.185 and 206.
10. al-Subkī, Tabaqāt, vol.5, p.166.
11. Wüstenfeld, op.cit., p.33.
12. Ibn al-^cImād, op.cit., vol.5, p.403.
13. ^cAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad al-Jāmī, Nafahāt al-Uns, Calcutta, 1858-9, p.663.
14. Yāfi^{cī}, op.cit., vol.4, p.206.
15. Ibid., vol.4, pp.206-07.
16. Ibid., vol.4, p185.
17. Ibid., vol.4, p.185.
18. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, pp.75-6.
19. Ibid., p.76.
20. Ibid., p.76.
21. Ibn al-^cImād, op.cit., vol.5, p.425.
22. Yāfi^{cī}, op.cit., vol.4, p.223.

23. E.I.¹, article 'al-Suhrawardī'.
24. It is reported that Ibn al-Mu^callim (d.714/1314), a Ḥanafī jurist, blamed Nawawī for not entering the public bath, and for living in straitened circumstances, Nawawī's reply was that an un-named man fasted and worshipped God until his bone became green. See Ibn al-^cAttār, op.cit., folio 9^a. See also p.159 of this Chapter.
25. See for example Ibn ^cArabī's opinion on al-Suhrawardī, Chap.2, p.38.
26. Baldick, Mystical Islam, p.198.
27. Ibid., p.204.
28. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, p.59.
29. al-Nabahānī, Jāmi^c Karamāt al-Awliyā', Cairo, 1911, vol.1, p.10.
30. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, p.60; see Chap.4, p.134.
31. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, p.61; see Chap.4, p.134.
32. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, p.61; see Chap.4, p.135.
33. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, p.61; see Chap.2, p.50.
34. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, p.61; see Chap.4, p.135.
35. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, p.60; see Chap.4, p.135.
36. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, p.60.
37. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.11, p.228; al-Nabahānī, op.cit, vol.1, p.273.
38. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, pp.72-3.
39. Ibid., p.73.
40. Ibid., p.73.
41. al-Nabahānī, op.cit, vol.1, the Introduction; cf. Ibn ^cArabī, Fut, vol.7, pp.233-5.
42. Nawawī, Bustān al-^cĀrifīn, p.12.
43. Nawawī, al-Arba^cīn al-Nawawiyya wa Sharḥuhā, Riyad, 1969, p.6.
44. Ibid., p.6.
45. Ghazālī, Ihyā', vol.4, pp.125-35.
46. Nawawī, al-Arba^cīn al-Nawawiyya wa Sharḥuhā, p.6.

47. Ibid., p.6; Graham, op.cit., p.125.

48. al-Ḥārith b. Asʿad al-Muḥāsibī, al-Riʿāya, Cairo, 1970, p.280.

Aiming to explain the meaning of ikhlāṣ, Sarrāj insists that knowledge must be joined with action, and action with sincerity. The latter must involve the seeking of God alone (literally the "face of God", wajh Allāh) with both knowledge and action. See Sarrāj, op.cit., p.6.

49. Arberry, The Doctrine of the Sūfis, p.90.

In numerous places in al-Lumaʿ, Sarrāj identifies ikhlāṣ with a purely disinterested belief and trust in God alone. See Sarrāj, op.cit., pp.83 and 421.

50. Nawawī, al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawiyya wa Sharḥuhā, pp.7-8; see also, Chap.4, p.136.

51. Nawawī, al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawiyya wa Sharḥuhā, p.7.

52. Nawawī, Bustān al-ʿĀrifīn, p.53.

This may be compared with Sarrāj's remark that sincerity must be sought by avoiding evil and by cultivating morality. See Sarrāj, op.cit., p.422.

53. Nawawī, Bustān al-ʿĀrifīn, p.53.

54. Ibid., pp.53-4.

55. al-Qushayrī, al-Risāla, Cairo, 1284/1867, p.124.

56. ʿAbd Allāh al-Anṣārī al-Harawī, Manāzil al-Sāʾirīn, Kabul, 1355/1936, p.70.

57. Nawawī, al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawiyya wa Sharḥuhā, p.8.

58. This learned man is probably Kharrāz himself.

59. Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz, Kitāb al-Ṣidq, edited and translated into English by A. J. Arberry, Oxford, 1937, p.1.

60. Ibid., p.3.

61. Ibid., p.61.

62. al-Qushayrī, op.cit., p.126.

63. Nawawī, Bustān al-ʿĀrifīn, p.29.

64. Ibid., p.27; see also Chap.2, p.54.

65. The meal is probably meant to be after the evening to make this different from the obligatory fasting, in order to escape the perpetual fasting (ṣiyām al-dahr), which is known to be condemned and considered invalid by the prophet. See Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.3, pp.112-13.
66. Wüstenfeld, op.cit., p.35.
67. See for example al-Subkī, Tabaqāt, vol.5, p.166.
68. The Qur'ān, 3:40.
69. Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr al-Qur'ān, vol.1, pp.280-1.
70. Ibid., vol.1, p.281.
71. Nawawī, al-Majmūʿ, vol.1, p.35.
72. Ibid., vol.1, p.35.
73. Ibid., vol.1, p.35; see also Chap.4, p.136.
74. Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, Qūt al-Qulūb, Cairo, 1310/1893, vol.2, p.239; cf. al-Suhrawardī, ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif, Beirut, 1983, pp.163-72.
75. ʿAbd al-Raʿūf al-Manāwī, Kunūz al-Haqāʾiq, vol.1, p.127.
76. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.7, pp.1-2.
77. Ibid., vol.7, p.8.
78. Ibid., vol.7, p.3; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.2, p.658.
79. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.7, pp.38-9.
80. Ibid., vol.5, p.94; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.3, pp.1388-9; Nawawī, Tarkhīs, p.35.
81. Nawawī, Tarkhīs, p.38.
82. Ibid., p.38.
83. Ibn Taymiyya, Fatwā fi'l-Qiyām wa'l-Alqāb, Beirut, 1963, pp.10-11.
84. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, English-Arabic, vol.5, pp.493-505; Nawawī, al-Tarkhīs, p.40.
85. Ibid., pp.42-3; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.982; see also Chap.4, p.137.
86. Nawawī, Tarkhīs, pp.43-4; Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.327.
87. Nawawī, Tarkhīs, pp.44-5; Mālik b. Anas, al-Muwattāʾ, English, p.253.

88. See Chap.4, p.137.
89. Nawawī, Tarkhīṣ, p.45; cf. Nawawī's views on mursal, Chap.4, p.132.
90. Nawawī, Tarkhīṣ, p.46; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.985.
91. Nawawī, Tarkhīṣ, p.47; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.981.
92. Nawawī, Tarkhīṣ, p.64; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.984.
93. Cf. Chap.4, pp.129-30.
94. Nawawī, Tarkhīṣ, p.65; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.984.
95. Nawawī, Tarkhīṣ, p.66; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.984.
96. Nawawī, Tarkhīṣ, p.67; Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.2, p.483.
97. See Chap.4, p.138.
98. Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. Ḥāzim, al-Hamadhānī, al-Iʿtibār fī Bayān al-Nāsikh wa'l-Mansūkh min al-Akhbār, Hayderabad, 1395/1940, p.21.
99. Ibn Taymiyya, Fatwā fi'l-Qiyām, p.11
100. Nawawī, Tarkhīṣ, pp.68-70.
101. Ibid., p.72.
102. Ibid., pp.72-3.
103. Ibid., p.32.
104. Ibn Taymiyya, Fatwā fi'l-Qiyām, p.12; Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.7, pp.513-14; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.980.
105. Ibn Taymiyya, Fatwā fi'l-Qiyām, p.15; Ibn Māja, op.cit., vol.4, p.323; Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.2, p.244; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.2, p.691.
106. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, p.356; Ibn Māja, op.cit., vol.2, p.1221.
107. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.7, p.526; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.3, p.982.
108. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, English-Arabic, vol.9, pp.293-4.

Chapter (6)

Ibn Taymiyya

Life and Hadīth

6.1. Life

6.1.1. Sources of Information

Ibn Taymiyya's fame is perhaps not less than that of Ibn ʿArabī. His biography has been dealt with by prominent Muslim historians, in works which were mainly concerned with the biographies of traditionists. It is significant that most of these historians were contemporaries of Ibn Taymiyya, and were either his students, e.g. Ibn Kathīr and al-Dhahabī, or his friends, e.g. al-Ṣafadī (d.764/1362). This gives the information that they provide on Ibn Taymiyya's life great credibility. In addition to these historical works, Ibn Taymiyya's own works, which have been printed at a steady rate by the Salafiyya and the Wahhābiyya since the 1890s, complete the sources for the study of his life.

6.1.2. Names

Taqī al-dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm b. ʿAbd al-Salām b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Abi'l-Qāsim al-Ḥarrānī b. Taymiyya. As indicated by his title al-Ḥarrānī, he was born at Ḥarrān, a city "in Northern Mesopotamia"¹, on 10 Rabiʿ 1 661/22 January 1263.² Taqī al-dīn is his title, and Taymiyya is the title of his ancestor (jadduhu al-aʿlā). His kunya (agnomen) is Abu'l-ʿAbbās.³

Ibn Taymiyya was not the first in his family to devote himself to the pursuit of knowledge. His father ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm was a well-known Ḥanbalī scholar, who was the leading shaykh, muftī (a scholar who issues legal opinions) and preacher of Ḥarrān. In 667/1269, shortly before the invasion of the Mongols, ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm fled with his family to Damascus. There he became a preacher in the Damascus Mosque and was appointed professor of hadīth at Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Sukkariyya, a college of hadīth, founded around the middle of the thirteenth century, inside which there was a Ṣūfī khanqa (lodge).⁴ ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm himself

inherited his position as the leading shaykh, mufti and preacher of Ḥarrān from his father ʿAbd al-Salām, called Majd al-Dīn (d.653/1255), whose reputation was even greater than that of his son. His works, e.g. al-Aḥkām and al-Muḥarrar fi'l-Fiqh, are considered reference works for Ibn Ḥanbal's school of jurisprudence, and he ranks among the top authorities of this school.⁵ Majd al-Dīn himself owes a great deal of his success to his uncle Fakhr al-Dīn (d.622/1225), who was a prominent Ḥanbali scholar and a ḥadīth expert.⁶

The preceding has shown that Ibn Taymiyya grew up in a very academic atmosphere. In Damascus, to which he fled with his father before the invasion of the Mongols, he started his formal education. In addition to his family background, his father's new position as a director and a professor of ḥadīth at the Sukkariyya college, in which Ibn Taymiyya took his education, must have been of great benefit to him. Besides, Damascus was at that time the second city of the Mamlūks and a great centre of learning. Ḥanbalism, the doctrine to which Ibn Taymiyya and his family belonged, had already been introduced in Damascus in the 5th century by ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Shīrāzī (d.486/1093). After al-Shīrāzī, the two brothers Abū ʿUmar b. Qudāma (d.607/1210) and Muwaffaq al-Dīn b. Qudāma (d.620/1223) strove for establishing and spreading this doctrine in this city.⁷ Many colleges of Ḥanbalī law, e.g. the Ḥanbaliyya and the ʿUmariyya, had already been established, and the followers of Ibn Ḥanbal had their own colleges of ḥadīth in this city, e.g. the Sukkariyya. These factors provided Ibn Taymiyya with a chance of good education that could hardly be improved upon. At the Sukkariyya he mastered the traditional Islamic subjects, and the study of Arabic language. Besides, he studied ʿilm al-kalām (scholastic theology), philosophy and mathematics.⁸

6.1.3. Teachers

Ibn Taymiyya studied under the direction of a number of Muslim scholars. The most important of these were:

1. Ibn ʿAbd al-Dā'im (d.668/1269).⁹
2. Ibn Abi'l-Yusr (d.672/1273).¹⁰
3. al-Majd b. ʿAsākir (d.669/1270).¹¹
4. Jamāl al-Dīn b. al-Ṣayrafī (d.678/1279).¹²
5. Aḥmad b. Abi'l-Khayr (d.678/1279).¹³
6. al-Qāsim al-Irbilī (d.680/1281).¹⁴
7. al-Muslim b. ʿAllān (d.680/1281).¹⁵
8. Ibrāhīm b. al-Darajī (d.681/1282).¹⁶

Under the direction of the preceding scholars, Ibn Taymiyya studied ḥadīth. He studied fiqh (jurisprudence) and uṣūl al-fiqh (the principles of jurisprudence) under the direction of the following scholars: 1. His father ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyya.¹⁷ 2. Shams al-Dīn b. Abī ʿUmar (d.682/1283), who was the first jurist from among the followers of Ibn Ḥanbal to be appointed chief judge of Syria, after the establishment of the new judiciary system by al-Zāhir Baybars (d.676/1277). He was also the first professor at the Ashrafiyya College of ḥadīth (called the Barrāniyya).¹⁸ 3. Zayn al-Dīn b. al-Munajjā (d.695/1296), who was succeeded to his post as a professor of law at the Ḥanbaliyya by Ibn Taymiyya.¹⁹

Under the direction of Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Qawī (d.716/1316), Ibn Taymiyya mastered the study of Arabic language.²⁰ His biographers tell us that he became qualified for teaching and issuing legal opinions before he was twenty years old. It was also at this age that he started writing his own works.²¹

6.1.4. Teaching posts:

When Ibn Taymiyya was twenty-one years old his father died. Ibn Taymiyya succeeded him as a professor of ḥadīth at the Sukkariyya College on 2 Muḥarram 683/21 March 1284.²² On 10 Ṣafar 683/17 April 1285, Ibn Taymiyya succeeded his father as a professor of law in a ḥalqa (study circle) in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, where he lectured on the interpretation of the Qur'ān for many years.²³ On 17 Shaʿbān 695/20 June 1296, Ibn Taymiyya succeeded his teacher, Ibn al-Munajjā, to the professorship of the Ḥanbaliyya College of law.²⁴

6.1.5. Ibn Taymiyya's participation in political, religious and social life and the difficulties that he encountered

From a tender age Ibn Taymiyya was surrounded with religious, social and political conflicts. His homeland, Ḥarrān, was the centre of the Sabians (al-Ṣābi'a) and the philosophers²⁵, while the members of his family were strict followers of Ibn Ḥanbal. When he was seven years old, he and his family were forced to flee to Damascus, in order to escape the fierce Mongols, who were about to attack Ḥarrān. At that time Ḥanbalism was already introduced in Damascus, and its followers enjoyed a relatively good position in this city. However, in comparison with the followers of the other three prevailing schools of jurisprudence (i.e., the schools of Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik and al-Shāfi'ī), the followers of this school were in a minority. Besides, while the followers of the other three schools accepted "the intellectualisation of the faith as inaugurated by al-Ash'arī (d.324/935)", the followers of Ibn Ḥanbal "kept to the old point of view and remained opponents of the Ash'arite."²⁶ This resulted in great hostility towards the Ḥanbalites to the extent that they were sometimes put on the same footing with the Jews and Christians. This is evident in a statement attributed to Ibn Rawāḥa (d.622/1225), the founder of the Rawāḥiyya College in Damascus. In this statement Ibn Rawāḥa is said to have stipulated that no Jew, Christian or Ḥanbalī should be allowed to enter this College.²⁷ Another problem was that of Christian and Jewish subjects in Syria and Egypt. The Mamlūks did not have a determined policy towards this part of the community, and in general there was a hostile attitude towards them.²⁸ This was a natural result of the successive attacks of the Crusades upon Syria. The public attitude was hostile not only towards Jews and Christians, but also towards the other ethnic minorities.²⁹ Moreover, the Mamlūks, though they were popular because of their victory over the Mongols and the Crusades, were not ruling in accordance with Shari'ī law, and there were many signs of corruption.³⁰ According to Ash'arism, which prevailed because it was the doctrine of the rulers since the time of Saladin³¹, to obey the ruler is to obey Allāh and the prophet Muḥammad.³² This resulted in almost total resignation, on the part of the ʿulamā' (body of religious authorities), in the face of injustice. It has already been said that

the Ḥanbalites were the only opponents of Ashʿarism.

The preceding factors in their entirety influenced the formation of Ibn Taymiyya's personality. He was known to be aggressive and hot-tempered. The following are selections which bear witness to this claim:

1. Once when he was a student, he disagreed with some of his colleagues about the answer to a question in a certain book which they were studying. When he was proved to be wrong Ibn Taymiyya dropped the book from his hand in anger.³³
2. Ibn Taymiyya himself tells us that when he was faced with a certain point in his studies, which he could not understand, he would go into deserted mosques, wallow in the dust and cry out, "O, teacher of Abraham (Allāh) make me understand."³⁴
3. It is reported that once he went to Quṭlūbek (d.729/1328), to voice the complaint of some people against the latter. Quṭlūbek is reported to have said to Ibn Taymiyya, "I am the one who wanted to come to see you, because you are a learned ascetic man." It is said that Ibn Taymiyya replied immediately, "Do not use your duplicity with me."³⁵
4. His student al-Dhahabī, who usually speaks in great praise of him, says about him, "He lacked in affability, and reacted in an off-hand way in most cases, may Allāh forgive him."³⁶

The year 692/1293 marks the beginning of Ibn Taymiyya's serious rebellion against certain religious customs. That was after he had made the Pilgrimage to Mecca in the preceding year. He wrote a treatise called Manāsik al-Ḥajj, in which he considered some of the rituals of the Pilgrimage nothing more than innovations (bidʿas).³⁷ His first involvement in political life was in 693/1293, when a Christian subject was accused of insulting the prophet Muḥammad. Seeing that the Mamlūks were not decisive in their policies against such actions, Ibn Taymiyya protested vigorously against them. Consequently, he was imprisoned for the first time, but for a short period. His work al-Sārīm al-Maslūl ʿAlā Shātīm al-Rasūl marks this occasion.³⁸ In 698/1299, Ibn Taymiyya wrote al-Ḥamawīyya, a treatise

on the Divine Attributes, which is full of critical opinions on Ashʿarism. His opponents accused him of "anthropomorphism" (tashbīh), and called for his condemnation. Later, however, al-Ḥamawīyya was studied by some scholars, and found to be in conformity with the teaching of the prophet and the salaf (predecessors).³⁹

Earlier we have seen Ibn Taymiyya opposing the Mamlūks' policies. In the following, however, he was of great use to them:

"He preached the jihād (holy war) against the heretics in the Lebanese mountains and against the Mongols. He headed the passive resistance to the occupation of Damascus by the Mongols and their ally, Sayf al-Dīn Qibjāq, in 1300. He issued a fatwā excusing the Mamlūk troops from observing the Ramadān fast before the Battle of Marj al-Ṣuffar against the Mongols in 1303."⁴⁰

During the year 704/1305 Ibn Taymiyya made strong attacks against certain religious groups. Among these were the supporters of Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine. In particular, he wrote a letter of condemnation to one of Ibn ʿArabī's followers, Naṣr al-Dīn al-Manbijī, who was the Ṣūfī master of Baybars al-Jāshnakīr (d.709/1310).⁴¹

In 705/1306, Ibn Taymiyya was again subjected to a trial because of one of his treatises on al-ʿaqīda (faith), entitled al-Wāsitīyya. After this work was discussed by three councils, it was also found to be in conformity with the Qurʾān and the prophetic teachings. Ibn Taymiyya was then cleared from suspicion.⁴² In Egypt, Baybars al-Jāshnakīr, Naṣr al-Manbijī and the Mālikī judge, Ibn Makhlūf (d.718/1318) were not happy with the outcome of this trial. Obviously, Baybars al-Jāshnakīr wanted to punish Ibn Taymiyya because of his attacks upon Ibn ʿArabī's followers, in particular, Naṣr al-Manbijī. Thus, in the same year, i.e. 705/1306, Ibn Taymiyya was summoned to appear before a council in Cairo. Again he was accused of anthropomorphism, and imprisoned subsequently. Owing to the intervention of Baybars's rival, the emir Salār, and the Bedouin emir, Muhannā b. ʿĪsā (d.736/1335-6), he was released on 26 Rabiʿ 1 707/25 September

1307. However, he was not allowed to return to Damascus.⁴³

In Shawwāl 707/March 1308, Ibn Taymiyya was engaged in another controversy with some Ṣūfīs about his abusive attacks on Ibn ʿArabī, and his views on the intercession of the prophet Muḥammad. He was questioned before a council. This led to his being imprisoned, and it was not until Shawwāl 709/March 1310 that he was released and honoured by Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn (d.741/1340).⁴⁴ Ibn Taymiyya then stayed in Cairo for about three years, and in 712/1313 he returned to Damascus in order to participate in the holy war against the Mongols. At the same time he resumed his teaching posts at the Sukkariyya and the Ḥanbaliyya and continued to issue legal opinions.⁴⁵ Then Ibn Taymiyya was imprisoned twice in 720/1320 and 721/1321, because of his persistence in violating a "decree of the Sulṭān", by which he was ordered to withdraw a certain legal opinion concerning divorce. Not only was he imprisoned because of this, but was also stopped from issuing legal opinions in general after he was set free.⁴⁶ Finally, Ibn Taymiyya's opponents struck him a fatal blow by bringing about the controversy about his opinion on the visitation of the tombs of the prophets and the Friends of God. This led to his imprisonment in the Citadel of Damascus from Shaʿbān 726/July 1326 until his death on 20 Du'l-Qaʿda 728/26 September 1328.⁴⁷ Inside his prison Ibn Taymiyya continued to write. He wrote many works by means of which he tried to defend his teachings. Among these was his work al-Radd ʿalā al-Ikhnaʿī, in which he severely criticises his opponent al-Ikhnaʿī (d.750/1349). Using his influential position, the latter complained to the Sulṭān. Consequently, Ibn Taymiyya was deprived of his paper, ink and pens.⁴⁸

Ibn Taymiyya died unmarried, and was buried in the cemetery of the Ṣūfīs,⁴⁹ which has been demolished, the University of Syria being built in its place.⁵⁰

6.1.6. Students

From among Ibn Taymiyya's students the most famous are:

1. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, a Ḥanbalī theologian and jurist who lived in Damascus between (691/1292-751/1350). He accompanied Ibn Taymiyya from 713/1313 until the latter's death. Like his teacher he was strongly against the teachings of Ibn ʿArabī; however, he was more deeply influenced by Ṣūfism. The most famous among his works is Madārij al-Sālikīn, a commentary on Manāzil al-Sāʾirīn of al-Harawī (d.481/1089).⁵¹
2. Ibn Kathīr (Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar, d. 774/1373). One of the best known traditionists of Syria, and the author of the famous work al-Bidāya wa'l-Nihāya, which is a history of Islam, and many other important works.⁵²
3. al-Dhahabī (Shams al-Dīn), who died in 748/1348 according to some historians, or in 753/1352-3 according to others. He was a historian, a ḥadīth-expert and a Shāfiʿī jurist. He wrote many works on Islamic History, e.g., Tārīkh al-Islām and Tadhkirat al-Huffāz.⁵³

6.1.7. Works

The number of works written by Ibn Taymiyya is large. According to al-Dhahabī their number amounts to 300.⁵⁴ The more important ones are listed by Ibn al-Qayyim, in a treatise called, Asmā' Mu'allafāt Ibn Taymiyya.⁵⁵ Thanks to the Salafiyya and the Wahhābiyya the great majority of these works have been printed. From among these works the most important is perhaps Majmūʿat al-Rasā'il wa'l-Masā'il, which is a collection of short treatises presenting the main views of Ibn Taymiyya.

6.2. Ibn Taymiyya's main opinions in the field of ʿulūm al-ḥadīth

In the eyes of his admirers Ibn Taymiyya is a mujtahid (one who practices ijtihād, i.e. the exercise of human reason to ascertain a rule of Shariʿa law) and a mujaddid (reformer of religious thinking). However, no one could deny that his teachings are centred on the doctrine of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal. Ibn Taymiyya's opinions concerning the sources and the criticism of ḥadīth are inspired by those of

Ibn Ḥanbal, and the former's works bear witness to this. The standards demanded by Ibn Taymiyya for the acceptance of ḥadīth are those accepted by Ibn Ḥanbal, and the only difference between him and the other followers of Ibn Ḥanbal in this connection is that he interprets some of Ibn Ḥanbal's statements concerning weak traditions in a different way than the others do. In the following an investigation of Ibn Taymiyya's opinions concerning ḥadīth, its sources and his standards for the acceptance of ḥadīth will be carried out.

First: it should be known that Ibn Ḥanbal and his followers, including Ibn Taymiyya, place the ḥadīth, or the sunna as they call it sometimes, on a level with the Qur'ān, in view of the fact that the former interprets and elucidates the latter.⁵⁶ To support this opinion Ibn Taymiyya says:

"(Allāh) says, 'For God hath sent down to thee the book and wisdom (al-ḥikma) and taught thee what thou knewest not (before),'⁵⁷ and he says, 'God did confer a great favour on the believers when he sent among them a messenger from among themselves, rehearsing unto them the signs of God, sanctifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and wisdom (al-ḥikma),'⁵⁸ and he says, 'And recite what is rehearsed to you in your homes, of the signs of God and his wisdom (al-ḥikma).'⁵⁹ More than one of the salaf (predecessors) said al-ḥikma means al-sunna. Because, other than the Qur'ān, that which used to be recited in the homes of the prophet's wives was his sunan (plural of sunna), and it is for this reason that the prophet said, 'I have indeed been brought the Qur'ān and something like it along with it (alā innī uwūṭitu'l-Qur'ān wa mithlahu maḥaḥu).'⁶⁰⁶¹

Secondly: Ibn Taymiyya classifies ḥadīth that constitute a decisive argument (ḥujja) into the following categories:

1. The mutawātir traditions that do not contradict the outward meaning of the Qur'ān, but interpret it. Examples of these are the traditions which specify the number of ritual prayers, the minimum amount of property liable to payment of the zakāt (alms tax), the details of the official Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca and the like.⁶²
2. The mutawātir traditions that neither contradict the outward meaning of the Qur'ān nor interpret it, but establish a new rule that is not mentioned in the Qur'ān.

Examples of these are the traditions by means of which the stoning of the adulterer (rajm al-zānī) is established.⁶³

3. Akhbār al-āhād (the isolated traditions) that have been transmitted by reliable transmitters. Ibn Taymiyya is of the opinion that this type of traditions constitutes a decisive argument even if their meaning contradicts the outward meaning of the Qur'ān. This is also the opinion of Ibn Ḥanbal and al-Shāfi'ī. It is worthy of note that Mālik and Abū Ḥanīfa have a different opinion on this matter. Their opinion is that the isolated traditions that contradict the outward meaning of the Qur'ān should be rejected.⁶⁴

Thirdly: Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on the ḍa'īf (weak traditions): The importance of discussing Ibn Taymiyya's views on the ḍa'īf arises from the significance of the opinion of the founder of the school to which the former belongs, i.e. Ibn Ḥanbal, on this type of traditions. Thus Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on this matter is better understood in the light of his master's opinion on it. but before we proceed to discuss the two scholars' opinions on this matter it is important to give a definition of this type of ḥadīth. The term ḍa'īf is used in the science of traditions to designate a weak transmitter of ḥadīth, or a ḥadīth which fulfils neither the required conditions of the ṣaḥīḥ (genuine) nor those of the ḥasan (fair).⁶⁵ In other words it can be said that the ḍa'īf is a ḥadīth which does not fulfil the conditions necessary for acceptance. The conditions necessary for the acceptance of ḥadīth are cited by Suyūṭī (d.911/1505) as follows:

1. al-ittiṣāl, which means the continuity of the isnād, on which the ḥadīth is based.⁶⁶
2. al-ʿadāla. The trustworthiness of the ḥadīth transmitters.
3. al-dabt. The state of being exact in keeping the words of ḥadīth and in handing them down.
4. al-mutābaʿa fi'l-mastūr. This means the finding of a tradition which is similar in its contents to another one, both of which go back to the same transmitter.
5. ʿAdam al-shudhūdh. This means that a tradition which is reported by a reliable

ḥadīth transmitter should not be in contradiction with another one whose transmitters are similarly attested.

6. ʿAdam al-ʿilla. This means that both the isnād and the text (matn) should be free from defects (ʿilal), such as giving a wrong name in the isnād, or a wrong word in the text.⁶⁷

Ibn Ḥanbal's opinion on the daʿīf is summarised in the following statements of his:

1. In one statement Ibn Ḥanbal is reported to have said:

"When reporting traditions from the prophet in connection with ḥalāl and ḥarām (that which is lawful and that which is forbidden according to Shariʿa law), sunan (model behaviour of the prophet Muḥammad) and ahkām (law and legal customs), we follow strict standards of isnād (tashaddadnā), and when reporting traditions from the prophet in connection with faḍā'il al-aʿmāl (ethical behaviour) and traditions which do not indicate legal customs (mā lā yadaʿu hukman wa lā yarfaʿuhu) we follow less strict standards of isnād (tasāḥalnā)."⁶⁸

2. In a second report the same scholar is reported to have said: "I prefer the daʿīf to reasoning by analogy."⁶⁹

3. In a third report it is said that Ibn Ḥanbal was asked about the authenticity of the traditions which are reported on the authority of Ibn Luhayʿa (d.173/789 or 174/790)⁷⁰. The former replied:

"The traditions which are reported on his authority are not to be relied upon (mā kāna ḥadīthuhu bi dhāk). And I write down the traditions that he reported only for purposes of comparison and supporting argumentation (mā aktubu ḥadīthahu illā li'l-iʿtibār wa'l-istidlāl). I may write down a tradition which is reported on the authority of a (weak) ḥadīth transmitter. This tradition does not constitute an argument on its own, but I present it with another tradition (with a similar text but a different isnād) so that the former tradition strengthens the latter, and in this manner it would seem as if I am using the former to constitute an argument."⁷¹

Commenting on the second statement, Ibn Taymiyya states that what is meant by daʿīf in Ibn Ḥanbal's statement is not the unaccepted tradition, but the fair (ḥasan). Ibn Taymiyya supports his claim by saying that at the time of Ibn

Ḥanbal the traditions were divided only into genuine and weak traditions, and that the weak traditions were sub-divided into accepted and unaccepted ones. Ibn Taymiyya claims that the first division of the weak traditions stands for the ḥasan, and that it is the one which Ibn Ḥanbal preferred to reasoning by analogy (qiyās). Some of the later scholars, such as al-Sakhāwī, contradict Ibn Taymiyya's claim, and demonstrate that there are points in the Musnad on which Ibn Ḥanbal uses weak traditions and not fair ones to establish a religious opinion.⁷² Besides, another statement of Ibn Ḥanbal supports Sakhāwī's argument and makes Ibn Taymiyya's claim unacceptable. In this statement ʿAbd Allāh, Ibn Ḥanbal's son (d.290/903), reports that his father said to him, "I do not violate the weak tradition if there is no other (genuine tradition) that disproves it."⁷³

Commenting on the third statement of Ibn Ḥanbal Ibn Taymiyya says:

"This statement implies two things: first, that a tradition (which is reported on the authority of a weak transmitter) constitutes only part of an argument and not a full one. Secondly, that such a tradition could not constitute an argument on its own, and this implies that a weak tradition which is reported via one channel is not to be adduced as an argument, unless it is supported by a tradition which is more sound."⁷⁴

Ibn Taymiyya's claim that the tradition that should be presented with the daʿīf to strengthen it should be a sound one is logically unacceptable, because if a sound ḥadīth is found, there will be no need for the weak one. However, he admits that two weak traditions with similar texts may serve as a sound one.⁷⁵

The collections of ḥadīth that Ibn Taymiyya expressly admits as canonical, or as sources from which the sunna of the prophet may be sought are: 1. The Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī (d.256/870). 2. The Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (d.261/875). 3. The Sunan of Abū Dāwūd (d.275/888). 4. The Sunan of al-Nasāʾī (d.303/915). 5. The Sunan of al-Tirmidhī (d.279/892). 6. The Muwaṭṭāʾ of Mālik (d.179/795). 7. The Musnad of Ibn Ḥanbal (d.241/855). 8. The other well-known Musnads (al-Masānīd al-marūfa), e.g. those of Ibn Māja (d.273/886) and al-Darīmī (d.255/869). He also acknowledges many other collections of ḥadīth (such as The

Sunan of al-Dāraqutnī d.385/995, The Sunan of al-Bayhaqī d.458/1065, and The Muṣjam of al-Ṭabarānī d.360/971) as sources from which the sunna of the prophet may be sought.⁷⁶ However, Ibn Taymiyya proclaims that some of these latter collections of ḥadīth contain some weak traditions, but "they are well-known to the people of knowledge"⁷⁷, he adds. It seems that by this addition Ibn Taymiyya meant to declare the latter sources of ḥadīth lower in the degree of authenticity than the former because of the weak traditions that they contain. Nevertheless, he meant to imply that the danger that may arise from the inaccuracy of such traditions is not considerable, as the people of knowledge are aware of them.

These in brief are Ibn Taymiyya's opinions concerning ḥadīth and its sources. In consideration of these opinions, one expects him to accept the doctrines of other scholars if these doctrines are built on traditions which are held to be authentic or genuine by Muslims, even if these traditions contradict the outward meaning of the Qur'ān. One also expects him not to attack opinions which are supported by more than one weak tradition, as he says that two weak traditions may serve as a sound one. He does not give us the conditions under which two weak traditions may serve as a sound one. And the only conditions that one could think of are that these weak traditions should not contradict the genuine ones, and that they should not be used to establish ḥalāl and ḥarām in line with the opinion of the majority of Muslim scholars.

6.3. Sources of ḥadīth used by Ibn Taymiyya

In his discussion of certain Ṣūfī doctrines and practices, Ibn Taymiyya uses ḥadīth in two different ways. First, he quotes ḥadīth to support his opinions with regard to some of these doctrines and practices. Secondly, he declares some of the prophetic traditions which the Ṣūfīs use to establish some of their doctrines and practices fabricated, and thereby, rejects these doctrines and practices, and considers them mere innovations (bidaʿ). The following is an investigation of the sources of the traditions which Ibn Taymiyya uses in the first manner. This

investigation reveals that Ibn Taymiyya was rigorous in sticking mainly to the traditions which are reported in the six canonical collections (those of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, al-Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasā'ī and Ibn Māja). He rarely quotes traditions from the other collections which are considered to be lower in the degree of authenticity than the former six works, but are still regarded as standard collections of ḥadīth. Examples of these are the Musnad of Ibn Ḥanbal and the Muwattā' of Mālik. There is one case in which we find Ibn Taymiyya quoting a tradition and mistakenly attributing it to the prophet. This is tradition number 26. There is also one case in which Ibn Taymiyya reports a tradition with a version which is not found in any of the standard collections of ḥadīth.

1. The prophet is reported to have said, "Among the nations before you...."⁷⁸ (Bukhārī & Muslim)
2. The prophet is reported to have said, "Nothing is left of prophecy except 'the heralding visions', seen by the righteous Muslim for himself or seen for him by others."⁷⁹ (Muslim)
3. The prophet is reported to have said, "You are the witnesses for God on earth."⁸⁰ (Muslim)
4. The prophet is reported to have said that God said, "Whoever treats a Friend of mine as an enemy fights duels against me (fa qad bārazanī bi'l-muḥāraba), and I truly take revenge for my Friends, and my revenge for them is as vigorous as that of a lion."⁸¹ This version is not found in any of the standard collections of ḥadīth. However, a similar version is found in Ibn Māja's Sunan. In this version it is said, "Whoever treats a Friend of Allāh as an enemy, fights duels against Allāh (man ʿādā li Allāh waliyyan fa qad bāraza Allāh bi'l-muḥāraba)."⁸² As for the saying, "And I truly take revenge for my Friends, and my revenge for them is as vigorous as that of a lion", which is mentioned as part of the preceding tradition by Ibn Taymiyya, I could not trace it to any of the standard collections of ḥadīth.
5. The story about Moses the prophet and his anonymous travelling companion (identified by Islamic tradition with Khadīr).⁸³ (Bukhārī)

6. The prophet is reported to have said, "Fear the intuitive eye of the true believer (ittaqwū firāsat'l-mu'min), for he sees with the light of God."⁸⁴ (Tirmidhī)
7. Abū Hurayra is reported to have said, "I have committed to memory two types of knowledge...."⁸⁵ (Bukhārī)
8. ʿAlqama is reported to have said, "I went to Damascus, and when I had entered the mosque...I asked God to provide me with a good companion. I then came to some people and sat with them, and an old man came and sat down beside me. When I had asked who he was and was told that he was Abu'l-Dardā' I said, 'I asked God to provide me with a good companion, and he has provided me with you.' He asked me who I was, and when I told him I belonged to al-Kūfa he said,...'Do you not have among you the one who was entrusted with the prophet's secret which no one but he knew (i.e., Ḥudhayfa)?' ʿAlqama replied, 'Yes.'"⁸⁶ (Bukhārī)
9. "It is reported on the authority of Abū Juḥayfa that he said to ʿAlī, 'Has the prophet entrusted you with knowledge that he had not entrusted the others with?' ʿAlī replied, 'No, by the one who caused the seed-grain to split, and created the wind (i.e. God), except an understanding of the meanings of the Qur'ān, which God may bestow upon a servant of his, and that which is (written) on this sheet of paper.'"⁸⁷ (Bukhārī)
10. The prophet is reported to have said, "I was a prophet when Adam was still between spirit and body."⁸⁸ (Bukhārī)
11. The prophet is reported to have said, "I was inscribed in God's presence as a servant of God and the seal of the prophets when Adam was prone in his clay."⁸⁹ (Ibn Ḥanbal)
12. The prophet is reported to have said, "Each one of you (is) collected in his mother's womb for forty days as nuffa (i.e., sperm), and then turns into a blood clot (ʿalaqa) for an equal period (of forty days), and then turns into a piece of flesh (mudgha) for a similar period (of forty days). Then Allāh sends an angel and orders him to write four things: his provision, his age, his deeds and whether

he/she will be of the wretched or the blessed (in the hereafter). Then the spirit is breathed into him."⁹⁰ (Bukhārī)

13. The prophet is reported to have said, "God was and nothing was with him."⁹¹(Bukhārī) Ibn ʿArabi, Ibn Taymiyya and a great number of scholars cite this tradition as "Inna Allāh kān wa lā shay' maʿahu". Not only does Ibn Taymiyya cite this tradition in the preceding version, but he also states that this tradition is best known by this version.⁹² I could not find this version in any of the standard sources of ḥadīth. However, a slightly different version is found in Bukhārī's Ṣaḥīḥ. In this version it is said, "Kān Allāh wa lā shay' ghayruh". This reads in translation, "God was and there was nothing save him."⁹³ A third version of this tradition says, "God was and there was nothing before him (kān Allāh wa lam yakun shay' qablah)."⁹⁴ It is worthy of note that all versions are reported on the authority of the prophet's companion ʿImrān b. Ḥuṣayn.

14. It is reported that the prophet was asked, "'Where was God before he created the creatures?' He replied, 'He was in a cloud, neither above which nor below which was any air.'"⁹⁵ (Tirmidhī)

15. ʿĀ'isha is reported to have said, "When the prophet got up at night he began his prayers by saying, 'O God, the Lord of Gabriel, Michael and Isrāfīl, the creator of the heavens and the earth, who knowest the unseen and the seen, thou decidest among thy servants concerning their differences. Guide me on account of different opinions regarding the truth by thy permission; verily thou guidest whom thou will to a straight path.'"⁹⁶ (Muslim)

16. The prophet is reported to have said, "If you were to let down a rope it would surely fall upon God."⁹⁷ (Tirmidhī)

17. The prophet is reported to have said, "You shall ride your mounts to go only to three mosques: The sacred Mosque (in Mecca), the Aqṣā Mosque (in Jerusalem) and this, my Mosque (in Medina)."⁹⁸ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

18. It is reported on the authority of Anas that ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb " used to ask al-ʿAbbās b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib to invoke Allāh for rain. He (ʿUmar) used to say,

'O Allāh! We used to ask our prophet to invoke you for rain, and you would bless us with rain, and now we ask his uncle to invoke you for rain. O Allāh! Bless us with rain.' And so it would rain."⁹⁹ (Bukhārī)

19. The prophet is reported to have said, "O God! Do not let my grave become an idol for worship."¹⁰⁰ (Ibn Ḥanbal & Mālik)

20. The prophet is reported to have said, "Do not turn my grave into a place of ʿīd (festival)."¹⁰¹ (Abū Dāwūd & Ibn Ḥanbal)

21. The prophet is reported to have said, "God cursed the Jews who made the graves of their prophets into sanctuaries."¹⁰² (Bukhārī & Muslim)

22. The prophet is reported to have said, "Do not exalt me the way Christians did Jesus, son of Mary. I am only a servitor of God and his messenger."¹⁰³ (Bukhārī)

23. ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have said, "I asked the prophet's permission to perform an ʿUmra (minor pilgrimage to Mecca) and he gave me permission, saying, 'Include me in your supplication, little brother, and do not forget me.'"¹⁰⁴ (Tirmidhī & Ibn Māja)

24. ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have said, "I heard the messenger of God saying, 'The best of the successors will be a man called 'Uways (i.e., 'Uways al-Qarānī), who has a mother (i.e., she is the only close relative he has alive), and has been afflicted by leprosy (bayād). Ask him to invoke Allāh to forgive you your sins.'"¹⁰⁵ (Muslim)

25. The prophet is reported to have said, "There is no harm in spells (al-ruqā) so long as they involve no polytheism (shirk)."¹⁰⁶ (Muslim & Abū Dāwūd)

26. It is reported on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās that the prophet said, "The devil said, 'My Lord, grant me a residence.' The Lord said, 'The (public) bath is your residence.' The devil then said, 'Grant me a Qur'ān.' The Lord said, 'Poetry is your Qur'an.' The devil then said, 'grant me a muezzin.' The Lord said, 'The mizmār (wood-wind instrument resembling the oboe) is your muezzin.'"¹⁰⁷ (al-Ṭabarānī)

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziya states that it is well-known that this is a saying of Ibn ʿAbbās.¹⁰⁸ That is to say it does not go back to the prophet, i.e., it is a

mawqūf.

27. The prophet is reported to have said, "I have prohibited but two sounds which are dumb and are of debauchery: An entertaining voice accompanied with the sound of the mizmār of Satan, and the sound of slapping cheeks and tearing clothes while crying out as people did in pre-Islamic times (when someone dies)."¹⁰⁹ (Tirmidhī)

28. The prophet is reported to have said, "(On the Day of Resurrection) God will come to them (the people) in a form other than his form that they know...."¹¹⁰ (Bukhārī & Muslim)

29. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib is reported to have said that he heard the messenger of God say, "The substitutes (al-abdāl), a body of forty men, will be in Syria, and as often as one dies God will put another in his place. By virtue of them rain will be provided, by virtue of them victory over the enemy will be achieved, and by virtue of them affliction will be averted from the Syrians."¹¹¹ (Ibn Ḥanbal)

30. Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī is reported to have said that the prophet said, "A group would emerge from the (two) different parties of Muslims. From these (two different parties), the party which is near to the truth will kill the emerging group."¹¹² (Muslim)

31. Anas b. Mālīk is reported to have said, "A man asked the prophet, 'Messenger of God, when one of us meets his Muslim brother should he bow to him?' The prophet replied, 'No.'"¹¹³ (Tirmidhī)

32. Abū Hurayra is reported to have reported God's messenger as saying, "If I were to order anyone to prostrate himself before another, I would order a woman to prostrate herself before her husband."¹¹⁴ (Abū Dāwūd & Ibn Māja)

6.4. Notes

1. E.I.², article 'Ḥarrān'.
2. al-Ṣafadī, op.cit., vol.7, p.16; E.I.², article 'Ibn Taymiyya'.
3. al-Ṣafadī, op.cit., vol.7, p.16.
4. Nu^caymī, op.cit., vol.1, p.74.
5. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.185.
6. Ibid., vol.13, p.109.
7. E.I.², article 'Ḥanābila'.
8. Ibn Rajab, al-Dhayl ʿalā Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābila, Beirut, 1982, vol.2, pp.387-8; al-Marāghī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, Ibn Taymiyya, Cairo, 1945, pp.40-1 and 45.
9. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.387; Ibn Taghribirdī, op.cit., vol.7, p.30.
10. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.387; Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.267.
11. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.387; Ibn al-ʿImād, op.cit., vol.5, p.331.
12. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.387; Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, pp.290-1.
13. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.387; Ibn al-ʿImād, op.cit., vol.5, p.360.
14. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.387; Ibn al-ʿImād, op.cit., vol.5, p.367.
15. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.387; Ibn al-ʿImād, op.cit., vol.5, p.369.
16. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.387; Ibn al-ʿImād, op.cit., vol.2, p.373.
17. See above, pp. 174-5.
18. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.387; Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.302.
19. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.388; Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.14, p.344.
20. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.388; Ibn al-ʿImād, op.cit., vol.6, pp.39-40.
21. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.388.
22. Nu^caymī, op.cit., vol.1, p.75.
23. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.13, p.303.
24. Ibid., vol.14, p.344.
25. E.I.², article 'Ḥarrān'.
26. S.E.I., article 'ʿAqīda'; Ibid., article 'al-Ashʿarī'.
27. Nu^caymī, op.cit., vol.1, p.267.

28. Irwin , op.cit., pp.98-9.
29. e.g., the Nuṣayrīs, the Durūze and the Ismāʿīlīs.
30. For example the Mamlūks used to collect taxes from prostitutes, which gives the impression that they approved of prostitution; see al-Maqrīzī, op.cit., vol.1, pp.187-9.
31. Ibid., vol.3, p.227.
32. S.E.I., article 'al-Ashʿarī'; Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī, al-Idāra ʿan Uṣūl al-Diyāna, Cairo, 1977, p.31.
33. al-Ṣafadī, op.cit., vol.7, p.17.
34. al-Marāghī, op.cit., p.50
35. al-Ṣafadī, op.cit., vol.7, p.17.
36. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.395.
37. E.I.², article 'Ibn Taymiyya'.
38. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.396.
39. al-Ṣafadī, op.cit., vol.7, p.22.
40. Irwin, op.cit., p.97.
41. E.I.², article 'Ibn Taymiyya'; Ibn Taymiyya, Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā, vol.2, pp.452-79.
42. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.396.
43. Ibid., vol.2, pp.397-8.
44. Ibid., vol.2, pp.399-400.
45. Ibid., vol.2, pp.400-01.
46. Ibid., vol.2, p.401.
47. Ibid., vol.2, p.405; E.I.², article 'Ibn Taymiyya'.
48. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.402; E.I.², article 'Ibn Taymiyya'.
49. Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, pp.395 and 407.
50. Jaʿfar al-Ḥasanī, in Nuʿaymī, op.cit., vol.1, p.77, note 10.
51. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya, vol.14, pp.234-5.
52. Ibn al-ʿImād, op.cit., vol.6, pp. 231-2.

53. Ibid., vol.6, pp.153-6; E.I.², article 'al-Dhahabī'; Ibn Rajab, op.cit., vol.2, p.389.
54. al-Ṣafadī, op.cit., vol.7, pp.17-18.
55. E.I.², article 'Ibn Taymiyya'; see also Brockelmann, op.cit, S.2, pp.120-6.
56. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, called Ibn Taymiyya, Majmūʿat al-Rasā'il, Cairo, 1323/1905-6, vol.1, p.20.
57. The Qur'ān, 4:113.
58. Ibid., 3:164.
59. Ibid., 33:34.
60. Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.4, p.131.
61. Ibn Taymiyya, MR, vol.1, pp.264-5.
62. Ibn Taymiyya, al-Musawwada fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh, Cairo, 1384/1964, p.233.
63. Ibid., p.288.
64. Ibid., p.288; see also Ibn Taymiyya, Rafʿ al-Malām ʿan al-A'imma al-Aʿlām, Cairo, 1318/1900, pp.29,33 and 39.
65. Nawawī, Taqrīb, vol.1, p.179.
66. The ittiṣāl is described by Goldziher as follows:

"This consists of the proof of the contemporaneity of the informers who are represented as receiving traditions from each other and that there was personal contact between the man handing down and the man receiving."

See Goldziher, op.cit., vol.2, p.228.
67. Suyūṭī, Tadrib, vol.1, p.179.
68. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, op.cit., p.163.
69. al-Qāsimī, op.cit., p.98.
70. For more information about this ḥadīth transmitter see Ibn ʿAdī, al-Kāmil fī Duʿafā' al-Rijāl, Beirut, 1985, vol.4, pp.1462-72.
71. Ibn Taymiyya, al-Musawwada, p.274.
72. al-Sakhāwī, op.cit., p.267.
73. Ibn Taymiyya, al-Musawwada, p.275.

74. Ibid., p.275.
75. Ibid., p.275.
76. Ibn Taymiyya, MR, vol.1, pp.274-5.
77. Ibid., vol.1, p.275.
78. See Chap.2, p.50.
79. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.348; cf. Chap.2, p.50.
80. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.2, p.655.
81. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.154.
82. Ibn Māja, al-Sunan, Cairo, 1953, vol.2, p.1321.
83. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, pp.38-40.
84. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.8, p.555.
85. See Chap.2, p.51.
86. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.215.
87. Ibid., vol.8, p.45.
88. See Chap.2, pp.57-8.
89. Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.4, pp.127 and 128.
90. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.7, p.210.
91. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.105.
92. Ibid., vol.2, p.105.
93. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.73.
94. Ibid., vol.8, p.175.
95. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.8, p.529; Ibn Māja, op.cit., vol.1, p.65.
96. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.534.
97. See Chap.2, p.48.
98. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.2, p.56; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.2, pp.1014 and 1015.
99. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.2, p.16.
100. Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.2, p.246; Mālik b. Anas, al-Muwatta', p.144.
101. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.1, p.218; Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.2, p.367.

102. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.2, pp.90-1; Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, p.376.
103. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.142.
104. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.10, p.7; Ibn Māja, op.cit., vol.2, p.966.
105. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, pp.1968-9.
106. Ibid., vol.4, p.1727; Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, pp.10-11.
107. al-Ṭabarānī, al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr, Beirut, n.d., vol.11, p.104.
108. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziya, Ighāthat al-Lahfān min Maṣāyid al-Shayṭān, Cairo, 1939, vol.1, p.251.
109. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.4, p.87.
110. See Chap.2, pp.46-7.
111. Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.1, p.112; Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.4, p.1381.
112. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.2, p.745.
113. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.7, pp.513-14; Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.3, p.98.
114. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.2, p.244; Ibn Māja, op.cit., vol.4, p.323; Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.2, p.691.

Chapter (7)

Ibn Taymiyya

Interpretation of Ḥadīth

7.1. Introduction

The traditional image of Ibn Taymiyya, which Muslim and early non-Muslim historians have co-operated in building up, is that of the arch-enemy of the Ṣūfīs and Ṣūfism, no matter who these Ṣūfīs are or what opinions they hold. The consensus of the historians on this matter made it seem beyond doubt until George Makdisi undertook an investigation which led him to declare Ibn Taymiyya a Ṣūfī of the Qādiriyya Brotherhood. This is not to undermine an earlier work by M. Henri Laoust, but this work, as Makdisi himself points out, "went almost completely unnoticed."¹ This is perhaps due to the cautiousness of the former in presenting his opinion on this matter. "It would seem", he said, "all the more difficult to admit, a priori, a possible influence of Muslim Mysticism on his education, as Ibn Taymiyya is himself commonly assumed to be one of the most irreconcilable adversaries of taṣawwuf, for which his school, after all, has often shown a distinct mistrust."²

According to Makdisi the blame for the earlier historians' failure on this matter lies on two things. First, the unavailability of "Arabic-Islamic sources." In spite of the efforts which are made to bring these sources to the light, the majority of them are still in manuscripts, and the printed ones are scattered in public and private libraries all over the world, which makes them uneasily accessible.³ Secondly, traditionally, the Ḥanbalī school, to which Ibn Taymiyya belongs, has been viewed as being an anti-Ṣūfism institution. This, however, has recently been proved to be unrealistic. Prominent Ṣūfīs, e.g. al-Anṣārī al-Harawī⁴ and the celebrated shaykh ^cAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī⁵, are proved to be members of the school of Ibn Ḥanbal.⁶ But it seems that it is mainly the Salafiyya and the Wahhābiyya⁷ movements who are to be blamed for misleading the historians on this matter. This is not to undermine the fact that they have contributed a lot to the

study of Ibn Taymiyya by the publication of his works, but it is to say that the above-mentioned movements spare no effort to present Ibn Taymiyya as the greatest enemy of Ṣūfism, an enemy who criticises Ṣūfism and the Ṣūfīs and disapproves of their beliefs and practices indiscriminately. This is well demonstrated in the latest edition⁸ of a collection of short works by him called Majmūʿat al-Raṣā'il wa'l-Maṣā'il. In this edition the materials have been rearranged and a new table of contents has been added. This has been done in a way that makes the work strike you as one of a scholar who is completely against Ṣūfism, while we have evidence which implies that this is not true.

The evidence that Makdisi presents to prove that Ibn Taymiyya was himself a Ṣūfī consists of two parts: First, a chain of "Ṣūfī initiation, or silsila". The chain consists of seven Ṣūfīs, all of them members of the Hanbalī school of law, who were "invested with the Ṣūfī cloak (khirqā)...by the celebrated Hanbalī Ṣūfī ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī." The source from which Makdisi quoted this document is still in manuscript.⁹ According to this document ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī invested with the Ṣūfī khirqā the two Hanbalī brothers Abū ʿUmar b. Qudāma (d.607/1210) and Muwaffaq al-Dīn b. Qudāma (d.620/1223). These two invested with the Ṣūfī cloak Ibn Abī ʿUmar b. Qudāma (d.682/1283), son of the former and nephew of the latter. Ibn Taymiyya was invested with the Ṣūfī cloak by this Ibn Abī ʿUmar b. Qudāma. The chain goes on to include Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziya (d.751/1350) and Ibn Rajab (d.795/1393) who is the last link in this chain.¹⁰ This document not only proves that Ibn Taymiyya has Ṣūfī affiliation, but it also proves that the general belief that the Hanbalī school was the "sworn" enemy of Ṣūfism is groundless.

Secondly, a commentary by Ibn Taymiyya on ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī's Futūḥ al-Ghayb. In this work we are told, Ibn Taymiyya shows great admiration for the author, Jīlānī. He also admires some other Ṣūfīs, among whom are: al-Fuḍayl b. ʿIyāḍ (d.187/803), Ibrāhīm b. Adham (d.165/782), Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī (d.215/830), Maʿrūf al-Karkhī (d.199/815), Sarī al-Saqāṭī (d.255/871) and

al-Junayd.¹¹ These Ṣūfīs he calls "al-mashāyikh ahl al-istiḳāma," or "al-mustaḳīmūn min al-mashāyikh," (the "upright Ṣūfī shaykhs.").¹²

In addition to the preceding evidence, Ibn Taymiyya's works bear witness to the great influence of Ṣūfism on his teachings. This influence is most clearly seen in his commentary on the traditions dealing with karāmāt (charisms), ilhām (mystical inspiration) and kashf ("unveiling").

7.2. Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on the traditions dealing with karāmāt, ilhām and kashf

First, it should be asserted that Ibn Taymiyya approves of the karāmāt (charisms) and khawāriq al-ʿādāt (miracles), and that he regards kashf ("unveiling") and ilhām (mystical inspiration) as types of the former.¹³

Ibn Taymiyya demonstrates that khawāriq al-ʿādāt (miracles), whether charisms (karāmāt) or the apologetic miracles of the prophets (muʿjizāt), fall under the sphere of three attributes: knowledge (ʿilm), omnipotence (qudra) and the state of being free from want (ghina). When combined together these three constitute "the attribute of absolute perfection".¹⁴ Every one of the three attributes can only apply to God in a perfect manner. But God may give his servant a certain degree of these attributes. So, the latter's share of these attributes is only as much as the former bestows upon him. So, God may make the share of a certain servant of these attributes over the ordinary. Thus, this servant's acts will be of "an overwhelming nature which breaks or tears through the natural order of things."¹⁵

Ibn Taymiyya demonstrates that karāmāt, kashf and ilhām are referred to in several traditions. For those that fall under the sphere of ʿilm (knowledge) he quotes the traditions:

1. "Among the nations before you there were people who could divine the unknown. If there were to be a person such as these in the Muslim nation, it would be ʿUmar."¹⁶
2. The prophet is reported to have said, "Nothing is left of prophecy except 'the

heralding visions' (al-mubashshirāt). They (the companions) asked, "What are the 'heralding visions'?" He replied, "They are the sound dreams seen by the righteous Muslim for himself or seen for him by others."¹⁷

3. The prophet is reported to have said, "You are the witnesses for God on earth (antum shuhadā' Allāh fi'l-ard)."¹⁸

Ibn Taymiyya gives a further explanation of this type of khawāriq by stating the following:

"The khawāriq that 'fall within the sphere of knowledge (ʿilm),' occur sometimes by 'hearing what others do not hear,' and at times by 'seeing either in sleep or wakefulness that which others do not see,' and at other times by knowing through revelation (waḥy) or mystical inspiration (ilhām) what escapes other people's knowledge. All three come under the term kashf."¹⁹

To furnish the proof for the khawāriq that fall under qudra (omnipotence) Ibn Taymiyya quotes the tradition in which God speaks in the first person and says, "Whoever treats a Friend of mine as an enemy fights duels against me (fa qad bārazani bi'l-muḥāraba), and I truly take revenge for my Friends, and my revenge for them is as vigorous as that of a lion."²⁰

Ibn Taymiyya adds that the khawāriq that fall within the sphere of qudra can be expressed otherwise as the ability to influence the occurrence of things in the universe (ta'thīr). This type of khawāriq occurs sometimes by "acting through resolve" (himma), "that is, producing effects in the outside world through concentration,"²¹ and at times by having one's prayers answered, and at other times by God acting on his servant's behalf. An example of this is the destruction of the latter's enemy by the former without the latter's interference. Again Ibn Taymiyya quotes the recently mentioned tradition in which God warns that he retaliates upon his Friend's enemy.²²

As examples of the khawāriq that were performed by people other than the prophets, and that fall within the sphere of ʿilm, or kashf in other words, Ibn Taymiyya quotes the following incidents:

1. The story of Sāriya.²³ In this story it is said that while ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was giving a Friday Sermon (khutba) he stopped and called, "O Sāriya, the mountain." It is said that ʿUmar repeated this two or three times, then he proceeded with the khutba. When asked about this ʿUmar is reported to have replied, "I saw Sāriya and his fellows fighting near a mountain, and I saw them being attacked (by the enemy) from everywhere. When I saw this, I could not help calling, 'O Sāriya, the mountain', so that they might take cover behind it." It is reported that some days after this incident Sāriya sent a letter saying that they met the enemy on Friday, and that they were fighting them without success until it was time for the Friday sermon. At this time, it is said, they heard a caller calling, "The mountain, the mountain". So they took cover behind the mountain, and eventually defeated the enemy.²⁴

2. The report in which Abū Bakr is claimed to have foretold the sex of a child of his before it was born.²⁵

3. The report in which ʿUmar is claimed to have foretold the birth of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (63-101/682-720).²⁶

4. The Qurʾānic story about Moses the prophet and his anonymous travelling companion, identified in Islamic tradition with Khadīr. In this story the Qurʾān tells us that the latter killed a youth in the presence of the former, who thought that this killing was unlawful. But later Khadīr told Moses that he killed the youth because he knew (by means of "unveiling") that the youth was a disbeliever, and that he would grieve his parents, who were people of faith, by obstinate rebellion and ingratitude.²⁷

As examples of the khawāriq that fall within the sphere of qudra or ta'thīr, and were performed by people other than the prophets Ibn Taymiyya quotes many examples, among which are the following:

1. The Qurʾānic verse which speaks about the miraculous food which Zakariyyā used to find with Mary (Maryam) whenever he entered her locked prayer room.²⁸
2. The Qurʾānic story of the transportation of the throne of Bilqīs from Yemen by

the un-named companion of Solomon in less time than that taken by the twinkling of an eye.²⁹

3. The story of Abū Muslim al-Khawḷānī (d.60/679). In this story it is said that Abū Muslim met in Yemen al-Aswad b. Qays (d.11/88), who claimed to be a prophet. al-Aswad is said to have asked Abū Muslim to bear witness that he was a prophet, but Abū Muslim refused. Then it is said that al-Aswad asked Abū Muslim if he believed that Muḥammad was a prophet, Abū Muslim answered in the affirmative. Thus, al-Aswad ordered Abū Muslim to be thrown into a great fire. It is said that the fire did not harm Abū Muslim.³⁰

Ibn Taymiyya adds that the above are only examples and that the incidents of this type are without number.

A summary of the preceding is that Ibn Taymiyya uses the previously mentioned traditions to argue that the khawāriq do exist. He indicates that the khawāriq are called muʿjizāt (miracles) when associated with the prophets, and karamāt (charisms) when associated with the Friends of God.³¹ The preceding also indicates that he uses the term kashf for the khawāriq that fall in the domain of ʿilm, and the term ta'thīr for the ones that fall in the domain of qudra.

Another important point that Ibn Taymiyya tackles in his discussion of the above-mentioned traditions is whether the non-occurrence of the khawāriq harm or lessen the degree of faith of a Muslim. Ibn Taymiyya's answer to this question is summarised in the following:

"The reference of Divine words (kalimāt Allāh) is to either the world of creation (kawn) or religion (dīn). An example of the latter is the Qur'ān and Sharʿ brought by prophets. The first is the realm of fore-ordination and creation (qadariyya kawniyya), the second of religious law and faith (sharʿiyya dīniyya). Unveiling (kashf) of the first for a man means knowledge of events occurring in the world of being or creation; unveiling of the second means knowledge of the religious commandments. Quite in the same way, to have power over the first is to exert influence over the phenomena of the universe; to have power over the second is to carry influence over matters of religious law (sharʿ). Then again the influence (ta'thīr) can be either personal (fī nafsihi) or universal (fī ghayrihi) for both

categories. In the first, personal influence is best exemplified by man's capacity to walk on the surface of water, fly in the air, or enter fire...; while universal influence would mean, for instance, the ability to cause someone else to be either sick or well, make him rich or poor, or even kill him. In the second, personal influencing can be represented by man's ability to be obedient to God and the prophet, and to adhere to the Qur'ān and the prophetic Sunna, both inwardly and outwardly. Universal influencing in the present case amounts to exhorting others to obey God and the prophet...This being the case, absence of khawāriq, (whether in the form of unveiling (kashf) or influence (ta'thīr)), does not harm (a Muslim in his religion). If knowledge of mysteries and of the invisible through kashf remains inaccessible to a man, then this is by no means a sign of weakness of faith nor does it necessarily result in a lowering of status before God."³²

However, Ibn Taymiyya clearly states that religion, if properly perceived and practised, should result in khawāriq when they are needed. To support this opinion once again he quotes the tradition:

"Whoever treats a Friend of mine as an enemy, fights duels against me. My servant draws near to me by means of nothing dearer to me than that which I have established as a duty for him. And my servant continues drawing nearer to me through supererogatory acts until I love him; and when I love him, I become his ear with which he hears, his eye with which he sees, his hand with which he grasps, and his foot with which he walks. And if he asks me (for something), I give it to him. If indeed he seeks my help, I help him. I have never hesitated to do anything as I hesitate (to take) the soul of the man of faith who hates death, for I hate to harm him."³³

For the same purpose he quotes the tradition, "Fear the intuitive eye of the true believer (ittaqwū firāsat'l-mu'min), for he sees with the light of God."³⁴

Commenting on the second tradition he states the following:

"This means that God declares war against those who declare war against a Friend of his. That his beloved knows, hears and sees through him. That his Friend strives and strikes through him. That he (God) gives him (his Friend) whatever he asks, and protects him whenever he seeks his protection."³⁵

The most significant of Ibn Taymiyya's opinions on ilhām (mystical inspiration) is that he believes that it falls within the sphere of al-maṣāliḥ al-mursala ("public welfare").³⁶

Speaking about al-maṣāliḥ al-mursala in one of his Rasā'il, he states the

following:

"Typical of it (al-maṣāliḥ al-mursala) are the Ṣūfīs' dhawq ("tasting"), wajd ("ecstasy") and ilhām (inspiration). because these experiences result in the benefit of the Ṣūfīs' hearts and faith...some scholars, however, are of the opinion that public welfare is specifically associated with protecting one's self, property, honour, mind and religion, but this is not true."³⁷

On the same point Makdisi refers to Ibn Taymiyya's commentary on the Futūḥ al-Ghayb of ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī and states the following:

"He (Ibn Taymiyya) upholds ilhām, or Ṣūfī inspiration, as evidence stronger than many a weak analogy, or weak tradition, or istishāb ("presumptive applicability of previous legal ruling") cited by those who are immersed in the law (fiqh), or divergence of the law (khilāf), or the principles and sources of the law (uṣūl al-fiqh). This is a quotation from the commentary of Ibn Taymiyya who has been generally regarded as the jurist who was Ṣūfism's enemy. On the contrary, we find him defending ilhām against Ghazālī as well as against the Hanbalī Muwaffaq al-Dīn b. Qudāma both of whom he finds to be acting too much like jurists when they say that what cannot be expressed is mere fantasy (mā lā yuʿabbar ʿanhu fa-huwa hawas)."³⁸

This is comparable with Ibn ʿArabī's opinion on the establishment of the authenticity of ḥadīth by means of "unveiling".³⁹ Ibn ʿArabī's opinion seems to be more in conformity with traditional Islam, as he explains that what is meant by "unveiling" here is seeing the prophet in a vision, and it is through this vision that the authenticity of a certain ḥadīth can be established or disproved. It has already been demonstrated that the prophet is reported to have said, "Whoever sees me has seen the truth."⁴⁰

A question of no less importance than the preceding is also dealt with by Ibn Taymiyya. This is whether the knowledge achieved through ilhām and kashf is guaranteed to be infallible or not. His answer to this question is found in the following statement:

"It is reported in both the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī and that of Muslim that the prophet said, 'Among the nations before you there were people who could divine the unknown (muhaddathūn). If there were to be people such as

these in the Muslim nation, ^عUmar would be one of them.'...So, these people are inspired by God (yūhā ilayhim)...nevertheless, they are not infallible prophets. The rightness of knowledge inspired to them is not always to be taken for granted, as this knowledge can sometimes be Satanic insinuation and not divine inspiration."⁴¹

Against this claim, i.e. that the knowledge of the muḥaddathūn could be Satanic insinuation, it may be argued that the prophet is also reported to have said to ^عUmar, "O, Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb! By him in whose hands my life is! Never does Satan find you going on a way, but he takes another way other than yours." This tradition is reported in both Bukhārī's and Muslim's collections of ḥadīth.⁴²

Now this subject is combined with the Ṣūfī concept of ʿilm al-bāṭin (hidden knowledge),⁴³ which has been strongly criticised by Ibn Taymiyya. He built his criticism on the claim that the Ṣūfīs have misinterpreted two traditions in this connection. First, Abū Hurayra's report, "I have committed to memory two types of knowledge which I learned from the prophet. I have propagated one of them to you and if I propagate the second, my head would be cut off."⁴⁴ The other type of knowledge that Abū Hurayra did not propagate, Ibn Taymiyya claims, was not religious knowledge or knowledge of God and his oneness, which his Friends have above others, but it was knowledge about the afflictions which were about to happen in the Muslim community. Secondly, ^عAlqama's report in which it is said that he went to Syria and when he entered the mosque he said, "O Allāh! Bless me with a good companion." So, he sat with Abu'l-Dardā'. Abu'l-Dardā' asked him, "Where are you from?" ^عAlqama replied, "From al-Kūfa." Abu'l-Dardā' said, "Isn't there amongst you the keeper of the secret (of the prophet) which nobody else knows, i.e. Ḥudhayfa?" ^عAlqama said, "Yes."⁴⁵ Ibn Taymiyya claims that the secret that Ḥudhayfa alone possessed was knowledge of the hypocrites (al-munāfiqīn) who participated in the Battle of Tabūk. It is said that the prophet was informed of them through revelation, and that he passed this information to Ḥudhayfa alone. However, Ibn Taymiyya does not provide a convincing evidence to justify his claim that the meaning of the two reports should be limited to the

preceding.⁴⁶

To argue against the *Ṣūfīs*' and the *Shī'īs*' claim that *ʿAlī* and the other members of the prophet's family possessed a secret knowledge that no one else possessed Ibn Taymiyya quotes the following report:

"It is reported on the authority of Abū Juḥayfa that he said to *ʿAlī*, 'Has the prophet entrusted you with knowledge that he has not entrusted the others with?' *ʿAlī* replied, 'No, by the one who caused the seed-grain to split, and created the wind (i.e. God), except an understanding of the meanings of the Qur'ān, which God may bestow upon a servant of his, and that which is (written) on this sheet of paper.'⁴⁷

That which was written on that sheet of paper is specified in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī as traditions dealing with the *diyya* (blood money), *fikāk al-asīr* ("the ransom for the releasing of the captives from the hands of the enemies"), and "the law that no Muslim should be killed in *qisās* ("equality in punishment") for the killing of an unbeliever."⁴⁸

Against this argument it could be argued that the same report bears witness to *ʿilm al-bāṭin*. The report confirms two things:

1. That the prophet did not entrust *ʿAlī* and the other members of his family with knowledge that he did not make clear to the other Muslims, i.e. written knowledge. This is supported by another version of the same report in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī. In this version Abū Juḥayfa is reported to have said, "I asked *ʿAlī*, 'have you got any book (which have been entrusted to you by the prophet)?' *ʿAlī* replied, 'no, except Allāh's book (the Qur'ān), or an understanding (of the meanings of the Qur'ān), which God may bestow upon a Muslim or that which is written in this sheet of paper.'⁴⁹

2. Muslims are not equal in understanding the meanings of the Qur'ān. The same may apply to the traditions. This does not mean that the prophet kept some of the revelation secret from the general Muslims, but it means that Muslims are different in their ability to perceive the meanings of the revelation.

In fact, the very argument that Ibn Taymiyya used to reject the Ṣūfīs' usage of the preceding report about Hudhayfa can be used to argue against his opinion on this matter. Ibn Taymiyya states:

"The prophet was informed of them (the hypocrites who participated in the Battle of Tabūk) through revelation (uwūhiya ila'l-nabī amruhum), and he informed Hudhayfa (alone) of their leaders."⁵⁰

The word (uwūhiya) that Ibn Taymiyya used in this statement implies that the information passed to the prophet was wahy, and wahy when associated with the prophet means the Qur'ān. In this way Ibn Taymiyya supported a claim that he has often strongly criticised, i.e. that the prophet withheld part of the revelation from his companions.⁵¹

7.3. Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on the traditions used by Ibn ʿArabī to support his theory of the Seal of God's Friends.

Correlating a prophetic tradition with a "heralding vision" that he claims to have seen for himself in Mecca in 599/1202, Ibn ʿArabī tacitly claims that the similarity between these two proves that he is the Seal of God's Friends.⁵² In this tradition the prophet is reported to have said, "My relationship to the prophets is like that of the brick to the house in the story of the man who built a house, completed it and made it perfect but for the space of a brick. People entered therein and they were surprised at it and said, 'had there been a brick (the structure would have been complete in all respects). The messenger of God said, 'I am the one who filled that space, I came and finalised the prophets.'"⁵³ Describing the "heralding vision" which he interprets in the light of this tradition, Ibn ʿArabī says:

"I saw in something like a dream that the Kaʿba (Muslim Holy Shrine in Mecca) was, as it were, built of gold and silver bricks. The structure was complete but for two bricks which were missing, one gold and the other silver. I saw my soul stamping itself in the place of these two missing bricks, and I realised that I was their very essence (ḥayn). The structure was then completed. I woke up and thanked God and said to myself, 'Among the

followers of my kind (the Friend-followers) I am like the messenger of God (Muḥammad) among the prophets'.⁵⁴

Using the same tradition, Ibn ʿArabī establishes his theory about the Seal of God's Friends and shows the relation between this Seal and the Seal of the prophets, who is believed to be Muḥammad in the Muslim world. He says in this connection:

"The prophet Muḥammad once compared the 'prophethood' to a wall made of brick which was complete except in one place which was to be filled by a single brick. Muḥammad himself was that brick. The important point is that he saw, as he says (in this tradition), only one single brick still missing. As for the Seal of the Friends, he would surely have visions of a similar nature; he would surely see what the prophet symbolised by a wall. (The only difference would, however, be that) he would see in the wall two bricks still missing, the entire wall being built of gold and silver bricks. And he would notice that the two bricks that were lacking in the wall were one gold and the other silver. Further, he would surely see in the vision himself just fit to be put into the place of these two bricks. Thus he would see that what was meant by the two bricks completing the wall was no other than the Seal of the Friends. The reason why he must necessarily see himself as two bricks is as follows. He is, externally, a follower of the law established by the Seal of the prophets. This fact was (symbolised in the vision by) the place for the silver brick. But this is only the 'external' side of the Seal of the Friends, concerning as it does only the legal regulations about which he simply follows the Seal of the prophets. But, on the other hand, in his innermost heart, he obtains directly from God that very thing in which externally he is a simple follower (of the Seal of the prophets). All this because he sees the state of affairs as it really is. So he cannot but see the matter in this way. And in this capacity he corresponds, internally, to the place for the gold brick, for he obtains his knowledge from the same source from which the angel (Gabriel) obtains that which he conveys to the prophet.

If you have understood what I have here indicated metaphorically you have obtained an extremely valuable knowledge about everything. Thus every prophet, (in the long historical chain of 'prophethood') beginning with Adam and ending with the last prophet, invariably obtained his (prophetic light) from the 'niche' of the Seal of the prophets, although the corporeal existence of the latter was posterior to others. This is because Muḥammad in his Reality, was existent (from eternity). To this refer his words (in a tradition), 'I was a prophet when Adam was still between water and clay'.⁵⁵

This statement and other similar ones provoked some Muslim scholars into accusing Ibn ʿArabī of infidelity (kufr). Among them is Ibn Taymiyya, who built

his accusation on the claim that these statements indicate that Ibn ʿArabī is of the opinion that the Seal of God's Friends (i.e. Ibn ʿArabī) is superior to the Seal of the prophets (Muḥammad).⁵⁶

It seems that Ibn Taymiyya misunderstood or did not take into consideration a vital point in Ibn ʿArabī's theory of the Seal of God's Friends and his relation to the Seal of the prophets (Muḥammad). According to this theory the Seal of God's Friends is a manifestation of the spirit of Muḥammad. "In him alone the spirit of Muḥammad is completely manifested".⁵⁷ In other words the Seal of God's Friends is a manifestation of Muḥammad the Friend and not Muḥammad the prophet. In Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of walāya (Friendship), a person in his capacity of a Friend of God is superior to himself in his capacity of a prophet (nabī) or a messenger of God (rasūl). He says in this connection:

"(When one and the same person unites in him these two or three qualifications) the man in the capacity of a 'knower' or 'Friend' is more complete and more perfect than himself in the capacity of a messenger or in that of a man who has instituted a divine law (i.e., prophet). So whenever you hear a man belonging to the 'people of God' saying -or whenever such a saying is conveyed to you through somebody else- that 'Friendship' is higher than 'prophethood', you must understand him to mean what I have just remarked.

Likewise, when such a man declares that the 'Friend' stands above the prophet and the messenger, he is simply talking about one and the same person. In fact, the 'messenger' qua 'Friend' is more complete (and perfect) than himself qua prophet and 'messenger'. It is not the case, however, that a 'Friend' (i.e., a different person who happened to be a 'Friend') who follows (another person who happened to be a prophet or messenger in the community) is higher than the prophet or messenger."⁵⁸

A further explanation of this is given by al-Qāshānī, and it is cited by Izutsu as follows:

"Ibn ʿArabī's description might be taken to imply the superiority of the Seal of the 'Friends' to the prophet Muḥammad, because the position of the latter is symbolised only by one brick, whereas that of the Seal of the 'Friends' is symbolised by two bricks, one of silver as the sign of his 'external' subordination to Muḥammad, and the other of brilliant gold as the sign of

his own light...(but) according to the tradition in question, the kaʿba had lacked one single piece of brick,..when Muḥammad filled the place the building was completed. This means.. that Muḥammad was *de facto* the Seal of the Friends. Except that Muḥammad himself appeared only as a prophet-'messenger', and did what he did only in that capacity, not in the capacity of a 'Friend'. He did not, in other words, manifest the form of walāya.⁵⁹

It is worthy of note that according to Ibn ʿArabī Walāya "is the basis of all spiritual ranks and the only element common to all of them."⁶⁰ He built this claim on the fact that walī is a divine name, while nabī and rasūl are not.⁶¹ Thus Ibn ʿArabī demonstrates that walāya is eternal, while prophethood and messengership (al-nubuwwa wa'l-risāla) are temporary attributes: walāya is general, while prophethood and messengership are "particular grades of it".⁶² He says in this connection:

"There can be no prophet, no messenger unless the Friendship is first established. The prophet is a 'Friend' who adds to his 'Friendship' one more distinguishing mark; namely, a particular knowledge of things unknown and unseen. And the messenger is a 'Friend' who adds to his 'Friendship' and 'prophethood' one more characteristic, namely being conscious of the mission and capacity of conveying Divine messages to the people who follow him."⁶³

Ibn ʿArabī's theory that walāya is "the basis of all spiritual ranks" is partially built on the tradition, "I was a prophet when Adam was still between water and clay." In Chapter 3 it has been made clear that Ibn ʿArabī uses this tradition to establish the pre-existence of Muḥammad's spirit, or the Reality of Muḥammad, and subsequently to argue that the Reality of Muḥammad is the original source from which all the Friends of God, the prophets and the messengers, including Muḥammad himself, draw their spiritual knowledge. Ibn Taymiyya totally rejects this theory and attacks it on the ground that the preceding version of the tradition is a fabricated one. He accepts the other version of the tradition in which the prophet is reported to have said, "I was a prophet when Adam was still between spirit and body."⁶⁴ He also approves of the tradition which says, "I was inscribed in God's presence as a servant of God and the seal of

the prophets when Adam was prone in his clay."⁶⁵ However, he does not take these traditions to imply the pre-existence of Muḥammad. Like al-Ghazālī, he believes that by saying, "I was a prophet when Adam was still between spirit and body", the prophet only meant to say that he "was ordained or predestined from eternity to be a prophet."⁶⁶

To support this opinion Ibn Taymiyya quotes the tradition in which the prophet is reported to have said, "Each one of you (is) collected in his mother's womb for forty days (as nutfa i.e., sperm), and then turns into a blood clot (ʿalaqa) for an equal period (of forty days) and then turns into a piece of flesh (mudgha) for a similar period (of forty days). Then Allāh sends an angel and orders him to write four things: his provision, his age, his deeds and whether he/she will be of the wretched or the blessed (in the Hereafter). Then the spirit is breathed into him."⁶⁷ Then he argues:

"Since the prophet says in this tradition that the angel writes one's provision, age, deeds and whether he will be of the wretched or the blessed after one's body is created and before the spirit is breathed into him, and since Adam is the father of mankind, hence, he said that he was ordained to be a prophet at this stage."⁶⁸

Ibn Taymiyya's argument can be challenged on four grounds:

1. The creation of Adam cannot be considered in the same manner as the creation of the rest of mankind, as it is known that according to Muslim belief God created Adam from a clay.⁶⁹ The tradition that Ibn Taymiyya used to support his argument speaks about the natural creation of mankind. Thus this tradition does not necessarily apply to Adam.
2. Ibn Taymiyya says that Muḥammad was ordained to be a prophet when Adam was between spirit and body because the former is the master of mankind. This means that he regards this as a privilege granted to Muḥammad alone because of his status as master of mankind. However, the same premise that he uses to reach the result that Muḥammad was ordained to be a prophet at the above-mentioned

stage (i.e., the angel wrote what is to come from Adam's descendants when Adam was between spirit and body) can be used to reach the result that all the other prophets were also ordained to be prophets at the same stage. Therefore, it does not follow that this was a privilege given to Muḥammad alone. This shows the contradiction in Ibn Taymiyya's argument.

3. In a tradition in which God speaks in the first person it is reported:

"^cUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was asked about this āya (Qur'ānic verse), "And when your Lord took from the sons of Adam, from their loins, their seed and made them testify against themselves, (he said,) 'Am I not your Lord?' They said, 'Certainly we testify (to it)' - (this was done) that you might not say on the Day of Resurrection, 'We were unaware of this!'" (S. 7:172). Then ^cUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb said, "I heard the (messenger) of God being asked about this, and he said, 'God created Adam and then touched his loins with his (God's) right hand and brought forth from them (his) progeny. Thereupon he said, "I have created these for Paradise, and they shall act in the manner of the people of Paradise". Then he touched his loins and brought forth from them (other) progeny. He said, "I have created these for Fire, and they shall act in the manner of the people of the Fire".'"⁷⁰

This tradition is reported in some of the canonical collections. It appears from its context that Adam's progeny were brought forth from his loins after the completion of his creation. There is nothing in this tradition to suggest that this happened when Adam was between spirit and body. Moreover, another version of the same tradition which is reported in al-Ṭabarī's Commentary on the Qur'ān confirms that this happened after the completion of Adam's creation. According to this version when ^cUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was asked about the preceding Qur'ānic verse he replied, "I asked the prophet about this, and he answered, 'God created Adam with his hand, and breathed into him of his spirit. Then he made him sit down, touched his loins with his right hand and brought forth his progeny...'"⁷¹ The soundness of this tradition hinges upon the reliability of ^cImāra b. ^cUmayr al-Taymī (n.d.). The six authors of the six canonical collections of traditions have accepted him as a reliable ḥadīth transmitter.⁷² This proves that according to the traditions what was to be from Adam's descendants (in general) came after the

completion of his creation (body and spirit).

4. According to another tradition which is reported in the Sunan of Abū Dāwūd, and accepted as sound by Ibn Taymiyya, God has written (ordained) whatever occurs in the universe even before the creation of Adam's body. In this tradition ʿUbāda b. al-Ṣāmit is reported to have said that the prophet said, "The first thing God created was the pen (al-qalam). Then he (God) said (to the pen), 'Write'. (The pen) said, 'What should I write?' God said, 'Write whatever is to happen until the Day of Resurrection'."⁷³ Accordingly, Ibn Taymiyya's claim that by saying, "I was a prophet when Adam was still between spirit and body," Muḥammad meant to say that he was written (ordained) as a prophet at this stage is a claim that cannot be justified.

7.4. Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on the traditions used by Ibn ʿArabī to support his theory of "the unity of existence" (wahdat al-wujūd).

The fiercest of Ibn Taymiyya's attacks was launched against Ibn ʿArabī's theory of "the unity of being". In the third chapter I have referred to the traditions which Ibn ʿArabī used to establish this theory.⁷⁴ The second chapter has made it clear that some of these traditions are traceable to the canonical collections, some of them not. However, it has already been demonstrated that Ibn ʿArabī argues that the authenticity of the latter is established by means of "unveiling".

In his attack against "the unity of existence" Ibn Taymiyya depends mainly on rational argumentation. In spite of his views on the importance of ḥadīth to establish religious opinions,⁷⁵ here he makes very little use of it. Surprisingly, he hardly mentions the traditions which Ibn ʿArabī uses to establish this theory. In his book al-Nubuwwāt, he briefly refers to some of these traditions by saying:

"A man asked me about the traditions that they (believers in "the unity of existence") use to support their doctrine, such as the tradition which says, 'the first thing God created was the intellect', the one which says, 'I was an unknown treasure...' and so forth. I replied that these traditions are

fabricated."⁷⁶

In the second chapter it has been demonstrated that the above-mentioned tradition about the intellect is weak and not fabricated, and that it has been transmitted via more than one channel.⁷⁷ As to the other tradition which is referred to in the preceding statement, Ibn Taymiyya does not offer any comment on Ibn ʿArabi's opinion that it is proved authentic by means of "unveiling", and it seems that he was not aware of this.

In MRM Ibn Taymiyya quotes the tradition, "God was, and nothing was with him".⁷⁸ He acknowledges the authenticity of this tradition. Then he attacks those who falsely incorporated into it the sentence "and he is now as he was". Notably, he praises Ibn ʿArabi for being aware that this additional phrase was not said by the prophet. Ibn Taymiyya says in this connection:

"The most knowledgeable about Islam among these, Ibn ʿArabi, knew that this additional phrase was not said by the prophet. So, Ibn ʿArabi said, "'God was and nothing was with him." Some of the men of learning incorporated into this tradition the phrase "and he is now as he was". By creating the universe God has not gained attributes that he did not have before."⁷⁹

Commenting on this passage of Ibn ʿArabi, Ibn Taymiyya says that the opinion it contains is identical with that of the majority of Muslim scholars. But he adds, "If Ibn ʿArabi were to stick to this he would have been in full agreement with the majority of Muslims."⁸⁰ By this he is probably referring to Ibn ʿArabi's comment on the original part of the tradition. Unfortunately (from Ibn Taymiyya's standpoint), Ibn ʿArabi goes on to say that the verb "kāna" (was) which is used in this tradition - ("inna Allāh kāna wa lā shay'a maʿahu")- "is a word which denotes existence (ḥarf wujūdī), without temporal implication."⁸¹ In other words God is now as he was. So, according to Ibn ʿArabi the tradition reads: "God is and nothing is with him."⁸² This is not to Ibn Taymiyya's taste.

Ibn Taymiyya adds that the generally recognised version of this tradition is, "God was and nothing was with him, his throne was on water, and he wrote on the

'Guarded Tablet' (dhikr) everything."⁸³ It is worthy of note that the term "dhikr" is usually translated either as "the remembrance of God" or as the Qur'ān, but according to Ibn Taymiyya what is meant by "dhikr" in the tradition is "the Guarded Tablet" (al-lawḥ al-mahfūz). According to him also this tradition only denies the existence of heavens and earth with God: it does not deny the existence of the throne. He correlates this tradition with the one in which it is reported that the prophet was asked, "'Where was God before he created the creatures?' He replied, 'He was in a cloud, neither above which nor below which was any air.'"⁸⁴ So, the cloud is not included in the creation (that followed God's existence) Ibn Taymiyya adds.⁸⁵ Hereby, he falls into the error against which Ibn ʿArabī often warns. This is to believe that something other than God existed besides God. In other words it is to believe that there are two essences in the world that deserve to be called the Eternal (al-qadīm, one of God's names), which is to attribute associates to God. According to Ibn ʿArabī the tradition in question should read: "The prophet was asked, 'Where did our Lord come to be?' He replied, 'He came to be in a cloud, neither above which nor below which was any air.'"⁸⁶

Ibn Taymiyya criticises the adherents of the "unity of existence" for their use of the prophetic tradition, "My servant continues to draw near to me..."⁸⁷ He states that they use this tradition to argue for their doctrine of the "unity of existence", while in fact it could be used to argue against this doctrine from many points of view. Ibn Taymiyya explains this in the following manner:

"(The messenger of God said), God said, 'Whoever treats a Friend of mine as an enemy, declares war against me,' whereby God established the existence of himself, his Friend and the one who declares war against his Friend, and these are three. Then he (God) said, 'My servant draws near to me by means of nothing dearer to me than that which I have established as a duty for him. And my servant continues drawing nearer to me through supererogatory acts until I love him,' whereby God established the existence of a servant who draws near to him through obligatory acts of devotion, then through supererogatory ones until God loves him, and when he (God) loves him (the servant), the servant hears, sees, grasps and walks by him (God), whereas the adherents of the "unity of existence" are of the opinion

that God is the very essence of his servant even before the latter starts drawing near to the former through supererogatory acts. They are also of the opinion that God is the very essence of all the created things. Thus, in their understanding God is the servant's stomach and thigh, they do not stick to the four organs which are referred to in the preceding tradition."⁸⁸

This statement contains great danger. To accept the argument that it contains is to believe that when the servant draws near to God through supererogatory acts the former and the latter become united in certain aspects, which is somewhat to believe in "unitive fusion" (ittihād). As far as Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine is concerned, "there can be no question of unitive fusion (ittihād), since, as Ibn ʿArabī's followers observe, that would require two essences to join together, and there is really only one Essence, that of God."⁸⁹ To Ibn ʿArabī and his followers, the unity about which the preceding tradition speaks is nothing else than the attainment to the stage in which the servant realises that there is no power and no strength save in God. In Ibn ʿArabī's terms it is the stage of "the removal of the attributes of habit and the elimination of the cause (ʿilla)." In other words the stage of "obliteration (maḥw)".⁹⁰ This is explained in more details in the following statement of Ibn ʿArabī:

"The Real is far too exalted to dwell (ḥulūl) within corporeal bodies. As for man, he sees through the sight which subsists through an organ, the eye in his head. He hears through the hearing which subsists through an organ, his ear. He speaks through the speech which exists in the movement and stillness of his tongue, his lips, and the places of articulation, from his chest to his lips. Then this same person practises acts of obedience to God in excess of what is obligatory for him, that is, the supererogatory good works (nawāfil al-khayrāt). This practice results in the negation of his hearing, his sight, his speech, and all his meanings, such as seizing and running, the properties of which had necessarily belonged to him. Because of the properties of these meanings, names such as hearing, seeing, and speaking had been applied to him. Now he hears through God, after he had been hearing through his own hearing. He sees through God, after he had been seeing through his own sight. Nevertheless, we know that God is far too exalted for the things to be his dwelling place (maḥall) or for him to be their dwelling place."⁹¹

Ibn Taymiyya also quotes the prophetic tradition in which the prophet is

reported to have said, "(On the Day of Resurrection) God will come to them (the people) in a form other than his form that they know..."⁹² Then he criticises Ibn ʿArabī and his followers for using this tradition to support their claim that God transmutes himself in every form. He states that this tradition speaks about the Hereafter and thus does not apply to this world.⁹³ Against this it may be argued that in Muslim theology it is a fundamental element to believe in God's omnipotence, and to believe that this omnipotence is eternal. To say that the preceding tradition does not apply to this world is to say in a way that God is not capable of transmuting himself in different forms in this world, which contradicts the basics of the Muslim concept of God. Moreover, it is reported in the canonical collections that the prophet said, "My Lord - inaccessible and majestic is he - came to me at night in the most beautiful form..."⁹⁴ This proves that Ibn Taymiyya's claim is groundless.

7.5. Ibn Taymiyya's interpretation of ḥadīth dealing with tanzīh and tashbīh (transcendence and anthropomorphism):

Like Ibn ʿArabī, Ibn Taymiyya uses the Qur'ānic verse, "There is nothing like unto him, and he is the hearing, the seeing", as the cornerstone of his interpretation of the traditions which are dealing with this subject.⁹⁵ However, Ibn Taymiyya's understanding of this Qur'ānic verse is completely different from that of Ibn ʿArabī. To Ibn Taymiyya this verse implies transcendence and nothing else. Accordingly, he believes that every tradition which deals with this subject should be interpreted on this basis, i.e., the absolute transcendence of God over created things. As V. E. Makari puts it, in Ibn Taymiyya's doctrine God's transcendence is based on

"the affirmation of the particular and negation of the general (al-ithbāt al-mufasssal wa'l-nafy al-mujmal). Thus, 'nothing is like unto him', meant for Ibn Taymiyya the affirmation, in the fullest detail, of all that is revealed of the Divine being, i.e., the divine names and the divine attributes given in the

Qur'ān and reiterated in the tradition,...and at any rate nothing is like unto him."⁹⁶

Ibn Taymiyya says in this connection:

"With regard to belief in the Divine unity within the sphere of the Divine attributes it is a fundamental principle to ascribe to God the attributes that he ascribed to himself, and those that his messengers ascribed to him, be it that these are attributes of negation or affirmation⁹⁷...and it is known that the method of the 'predecessors' (ṭarīqat al-salaf) was to affirm the Divine attributes which God affirmed without asking how or 'likening God to a created thing'⁹⁸(min ghayr takyīf wa lā tamthīl), and without tahrīf (alteration) or ta^cṭīl ("a theological concept denying God all attributes"). In the same manner they (the salaf) negated the attributes that God negated of himself...as God says, 'There is nothing like unto him, and he is the hearing, the seeing'. 'There is nothing like unto him', implies rejection of anthropomorphism (al-tashbīh) and 'likening God to created things' (al-tamthīl). 'And he is the hearing, the seeing', implies rejection of heresy (al-ilhād) and 'the concept denying God all attributes' (al-ta^cṭīl). God sent his messengers with 'the affirmation of the particular (attributes) and negation of the general (anthropomorphism)'. So the messengers affirmed particular attributes as being divine; at the same time they negated of God (in general) all the attributes that fall under tashbīh and tamthīl, which are not suited for him."⁹⁹

From the preceding it is clear that Ibn Taymiyya concedes the attributes to God. However, he strongly holds the view that these attributes should not be likened to those of created things in whatever way. If we consider this opinion from Ibn ^cArabi's point of view on this subject we find that it is one-sided, i.e., it does not apply to the traditions that support the concept of tashbīh. Moreover, we find that Ibn Taymiyya is himself a mushabbih (one who believes in tashbīh). An explanation of this is that from Ibn ^cArabi's point of view, tanzīh is delimitation, and delimitation is tashbīh.¹⁰⁰ On the other hand Ibn Taymiyya attacks Ibn ^cArabi and those who held views similar to his on this matter. He attacks their concept that combines tanzīh and tashbīh, and the concept of bewilderment (ḥayra) that it results in.¹⁰¹ He states that the well-known saying, "My Lord, increase my bewilderment in thee", which is attributed by some Ṣūfīs, including Ibn ^cArabi, to the prophet is a fabricated one.¹⁰² Furthermore, Ibn Taymiyya says that the

concept of bewilderment is not accepted because bewilderment indicates ignorance, and God does not like his servant to be ignorant of him. He quotes the prophetic tradition in which ʿĀ'isha, the prophet's wife, is reported to have said, "When the prophet got up at night he began his prayers by saying, 'O God, the Lord of Gabriel, Michael and Isrāfīl, the creator of the heavens and the earth, who knowest the unseen and the seen, thou decidest among thy servants concerning their differences. Guide me on account of different opinions regarding the truth by thy permission; verily thou guidest whom thou wilt to a straight path.'" ¹⁰³ Then he argues that the prophet asked God guidance and not ignorance. ¹⁰⁴ It seems that Ibn Taymiyya did not quite understand what Ibn ʿArabī and his followers meant by hayra. In the latter's usage this term does not indicate ignorance, but knowledge. This is explained by W. C. Chittick as follows:

"To find God is to fall into bewilderment (hayra), not the bewilderment of being lost and unable to find one's way, but the bewilderment of finding and knowing God and of not-finding and not-knowing him at the same time. Every existent thing other than God dwells in a never-never land of affirmation and negation, finding and losing, knowing and not-knowing. The difference between the finders and the rest of us is that they are fully aware of their own ambiguous situation. They know the significance of the saying of the first Caliph Abū Bakr: 'Incapacity to attain comprehension is itself comprehension.' They know that the answer to every significant question concerning God and the world is 'Yes and no,' or, as the Shaykh expresses it, 'He/not he' (huwa lā huwa)."¹⁰⁵

Ibn Taymiyya's interpretation of the tradition, "If you were to let down a rope it would surely fall upon God", deserves to be paid a special attention. The direct meaning of this tradition indicates tashbīh. However, Ibn Taymiyya interprets it away as follows:

"The prophetic saying, 'If you were to let down a rope it would surely fall upon God', (contains) a result which is built on a surmised condition. If this condition (i.e., that someone could let down a rope) were to occur, the result (i.e., the falling of the rope upon God) would be fulfilled. But neither the condition, nor the result can occur, because the expression 'let down' is meaningless unless we assume that the heavens are under the earth, and this

is not true. So, a rope cannot be let down, and it cannot fall upon God."¹⁰⁶

It is clear from this statement that while trying to interpret away this tradition, to make it in conformity with the concept of tanzīh, Ibn Taymiyya, unconsciously perhaps, delimited God, by assuming that God is in heavens only. Consequently he fell into tashbīh, because to delimit God is to ascribe to him a characteristic of created things. This explains what Ibn ʿArabī meant by saying that all types of tanzīh are delimitation, and delimitation is tashbīh.

7.6. Ibn Taymiyya's use of ḥadīth in presenting his views on visiting the tombs of the prophets and the pious (ziyārat qubūr al-anbiyā' wa'l-ṣāliḥīn)

Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on visitation to the tombs, especially that of the prophet, provoked the Ṣūfīs and the majority of Muslim scholars beyond endurance and led to his condemnation and imprisonment for the rest of his life.¹⁰⁷ A summary of his opinion on this matter is that on the one hand visitation to the tombs or the graves is permissible only if one happened to be in the places where these tombs are, and only if the aim of the visit is to salute and to "invoke divine mercy and blessing upon their inmates".¹⁰⁸ On the other hand it is not permissible to make a special journey in order to visit a grave, no matter whether the inmate of this grave is a Friend of God, a prophet, or even the prophet Muḥammad himself.¹⁰⁹

Ibn Taymiyya's opinion that one should not make a special journey to visit a grave is built on his understanding of a prophetic tradition which he often quotes. In this tradition the prophet is reported to have said, "You shall ride your mounts to go only to three mosques: The sacred Mosque (in Mecca), the Aqṣā Mosque (in Jerusalem) and this, my Mosque (in Medina)."¹¹⁰ The Arabic version of this tradition, as reported by al-Bukhārī, is, "lā tushadd al-riḥāl illā ilā thalātha masājid." This means literally, "The saddles shall not be fastened (for journey) except for three mosques." However, this tradition can be translated into two different ways. This depends on the interpretation of the "initial phrase of the

sentence": lā tushadd al-riḥāl illā ilā, "the saddles shall not be fastened (for journey) except for". In this phrase the "general term" from which the exception is made is not specified. Thus, Ibn Taymiyya and his followers argued that this tradition should mean, "do not set out for any place except for the three mosques", while the others argued that it should mean, "do not set out for any mosque except for the three mosques."¹¹¹ ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Kāfī al-Subkī (683-756/1284-1355), a contemporary of Ibn Taymiyya, for whom the latter is said to have had great respect, devoted a whole work, i.e. Shifā' al-Siqām, to criticise Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on this matter. Subkī's criticism on Ibn Taymiyya's understanding of the tradition can be summarised as follows:

1. That the meaning of this tradition is either that no mosque should be travelled to except those specified three, or that no place should be travelled to except those three specified mosques.
2. In every journey there are two important elements: first, the reason of the journey, e.g. to perform the pilgrimage; to seek knowledge; etc; secondly, the destination of the journey.
3. Without doubt it is obligatory that a Muslim travel to ʿArafa¹¹² to perform his religious duty, and ʿArafa is not one of the three mosques which are specified in that tradition. Also there is general agreement among Muslims that it is permissible for a Muslim to journey to anywhere to seek knowledge. In some cases it becomes obligatory for a Muslim to make such a journey. The same thing applies to travelling to perform holy war (jihād), visiting one's parents and the like.
4. As a result of the preceding the meaning of the tradition which is our present concern should be: No mosque should be travelled to except the specified three. In other words this tradition speaks only about mosques, therefore, the prohibition that it contains does not apply to graves or tombs.¹¹³

Commenting on the argument of Ibn Taymiyya's opponents about the interpretation of this tradition, M. J. Kister states the following:

"They could in fact quote a ḥadīth in which they could find a convincing proof of their argument: lā tushadd riḥāl al-maṭiyy ilā masjid yudhkar Allāh fih illā ilā thalātha masājid...(the saddles of the riding beasts shall not be fastened [for their journey] to a mosque in which God is invoked except to the three mosques)...¹¹⁴ Even more explicit in favour of this view is another ḥadīth: lā yanbaghī li'l-musallī an yashudd riḥālahu ilā masjid yabghī fihī'l-ṣalāt ghayr al-masjid al-ḥarām wa'l-masjid al-aqṣā wa masjidi hādha. (It is not proper that a man praying set out for a mosque in which he seeks to pray except the mosque of the Ḥarām, the mosque of al-Aqṣā and my mosque).¹¹⁵¹¹⁶

It seems that no one, except the Wahhābīs of our times, agrees with Ibn Taymiyya on this matter. Even those who sympathised with him, and tried to explain that he issued this juristic opinion from motives of fear that the visitation to the graves of the prophets and the righteous might lead some people to worship the inmates of these graves, did not agree with him on this matter. Among these is Abū Zahra, a contemporary scholar.¹¹⁷

In addition to the preceding argument Subkī quotes fifteen traditions, all of which encourage Muslims to visit the prophet's grave. The most important among these traditions is the one reported by al-Dāraqutnī, in which the prophet is reported to have said, "He who visits my grave surely deserves my intercession (man zāra qabrī wajabat lahu shafāʿatī)."¹¹⁸ This tradition is also reported via many other different channels.¹¹⁹ Moreover, Subkī quotes a report which he claims to be genuine, and in which Bilāl, the prophet's companion (d.20/640), is reported to have made a journey from Syria to Medina in order to visit the prophet's grave. Among others who reported this report is Ibn ʿAsākir (d.571/1176), the ḥadīth-expert,¹²⁰ and it is known among Muslims that such a report, if proved to be genuine, "constitutes a decisive argument".

It should also be added that the permissibility of visiting the graves in general is proved by the tradition in which Burayda reported God's messenger as saying, "I forbade you to visit graves, but you may now visit them."¹²¹

7.7. Petition (tawassul)

Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on this matter in brief is that he "concedes the right to the living prophets and Friends of God to intercede and mediate with God on behalf of a mortal but energetically withholds it from the dead ones."¹²² He says in this connection:

"The people of knowledge agreed that the prophet's companions used to seek his intercession in his lifetime. It is also reported in the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, on the authority of Anas that ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb 'used to ask al-ʿAbbās b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib to invoke Allāh for rain. He used to say, O Allāh! We used to ask our prophet to invoke you for rain, and you would bless us with rain, and now we ask his uncle to invoke you for rain. O Allāh! Bless us with rain. And so it would rain'¹²³...Asking someone to invoke Allāh for rain (istisqā') is the same as asking someone to invoke Allāh for mercy (istishfāʿ)...It is also reported that Muʿāwiyā b. Abī Sufyān (d.60/285) asked Yazīd b. al-Aswad (n.d.) to invoke Allāh for rain. Muʿāwiyā said, O Allāh! We ask the best among us to intercede with you and petition you on our behalf (nastashfiʿ wa natawassal ilayk bi khiyārīnā)...Thus, the learned said that it is recommendable to ask the religious people and the righteous to invoke Allāh for rain...As to (the question of) seeking the prophet's intercession during his absence or after his death, nothing of the sort is traced back to the behaviour of the companions (ṣaḥāba) or the successors (ṭabiʿīn)."¹²⁴

To support his opinion that one should not seek the prophet's intercession at his grave Ibn Taymiyya quotes the following traditions in which the prophet is reported as saying:

1. "O God! Do not let my grave become an idol for worship."¹²⁵
2. "Do not turn my grave into a place of ʿīd (festival)."¹²⁶
3. "God cursed the Jews who made the graves of their prophets into sanctuaries."¹²⁷
4. "Do not exalt me the way Christians did Jesus, son of Mary. I am only a servitor of God and his messenger."¹²⁸

It seems to me that none of these traditions constitute an argument for the preceding opinion of Ibn Taymiyya.

Against Ibn Taymiyya's opinion that one cannot seek the prophet's intercession during the latter's absence or after his death Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī

argues:

1. Tirmidhī reported on the authority of ʿUthmān b. Ḥanīf that a blind man came to the prophet asking him to pray to God to restore him his eyesight. The prophet then said, "If you wish I will pray for you (in order to fulfil your need), and if you bear patiently it is better for you." The blind man said, "Pray for me." So, the prophet ordered him to perform wuḍū' (ritual ablution before prayer) accurately, and to say afterwards the following prayer, "O Allāh! I ask you and 'entreat' you in the name of your prophet, the prophet of mercy. O Muḥammad! I have entreated my Lord in your name to fulfil my need. O Allāh! Accept his intercession on my behalf."¹²⁹ This tradition proves that it is permissible to seek the prophet's intercession during his absence. An explanation of this is that the man was directed by the prophet to perform this prayer on his own. Ibn Taymiyya himself quoted this tradition, but it seems that he failed to see that it could be used to argue against his opinion on this matter.¹³⁰

2. ʿUthmān b. Ḥanīf, the prophet's companion, who reported the preceding tradition, is reported to have directed a man, during the Caliphate of ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān (d.35/656), in the presence of other companions and successors, to say the preceding prayer in order to fulfil a certain wish.¹³¹ Subkī argues that this means that these companions understood that this prayer could be used after the prophet's death. In other words it is permissible to seek the prophet's intercession after his death. Subkī adds that ʿUthmān b. Ḥanīf and the other companions and successors who were involved in this report are more knowledgeable of religious affairs.

It has already been said that Ibn Taymiyya agrees that it is permissible to seek the intercession of the righteous people and the Friends of God during their lives. In addition to the previously mentioned traditions he quotes two others to support this opinion. First, the tradition in which ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have said, "I asked the prophet's permission to perform an ʿUmra and he gave me permission, saying, 'Include me in your supplication, little brother, and do not forget me.'"¹³²

Secondly, the tradition in which ʿUmar b. Al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have said, "I heard the messenger of God saying, 'The best among the successors is a man called 'Uways (i.e. 'Uways al-Qarānī). He has a mother (i.e. she is the only close relative he has alive), and he used to suffer from leprosy (i.e. he is now cured). Ask him to invoke Allāh to forgive you your sins.'" ¹³³ However, Ibn Taymiyya strongly denies the permissibility of seeking the intercession of the righteous people and the Friends of God after their death. ¹³⁴ This implies that Ibn Taymiyya believes that these people are not alive in their graves. Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī claims that according to Muslim belief all people are alive in their graves. He supports this opinion with the following:

1. People do hear and talk in their graves. This is proved by a tradition which is reported in al-Bukhārī's Ṣaḥīḥ, on the authority of Anas b. Mālīk. In it the prophet is reported to have said, "When Allāh's slave is put into his grave and his companions return and he even hear their footsteps, two angels come to him and make him sit and ask, 'What did you use to think of this man (i.e. Muḥammad)?' The faithful believer will say, 'I testify that he is Allāh's slave and his messenger.' Then they will say to him, 'Look at your place in the Hell Fire; Allāh has given you a place in Paradise instead of it.' So he will see both places." ¹³⁵
2. People have consciousness in their graves. This is proved by the authentic traditions which are reported in both Bukhārī's and Muslim's Ṣaḥīḥs on punishment in the grave. ¹³⁶
3. There is consensus of the authorities that people are alive in their graves.
4. In al-Mustadrak of al-Ḥākim, ʿĀ'isha, the prophet's wife is reported to have said, "I used to enter my house in which God's messenger was (buried) and put off my garment, saying that only my husband and my father were there; but when ʿUmar was buried along with them, I swear by God that I did not enter it without having my clothes wrapped round me owing to modesty regarding ʿUmar." ¹³⁷ Ḥākim confirms that this is an authentic tradition, in which the conditions of acceptance which are adopted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim are fulfilled.

Subkī then argues that since people are alive in their graves, they should be treated in the same way they used to be treated before their death. In other words it is permissible to entreat God in the name of a dead person.¹³⁸

7.8. Ruqā (spells)

The Wahhābīs, who are believed to be the "direct and most vocal successors of Ibn Taymiyya's doctrine",¹³⁹ condemn this practice. However, Ibn Taymiyya makes it clear that this practice is permissible. He says in this connection:

"It is reported in the authentic tradition that the prophet said, 'There is no harm in spells so long as they involve no polytheism (shirk).'¹⁴⁰ These (i.e. the spells in which polytheism is involved) are the ones in which one makes use of jinn (genies)."¹⁴¹

7.9. Ibn Taymiyya's use of ḥadīth in discussing the Ṣūfī practice of samāʿ ("listening to poetry or music"):

The diversity of opinions on the permissibility of the Ṣūfī samāʿ stems from the diversity of opinions on the permissibility of ghināʾ (singing) in general. In spite of the fact that there are many traditions which are related to this subject, none of them states clearly whether singing is ḥarām (unlawful), ḥalāl (lawful), makrūh (detested) or mubāh (permissible). Thus, the juristic opinions on this question varied between the four preceding legal judgements according to each scholar's understanding of these traditions, an understanding which is based on each scholar's own ijtihād (independent decision). Muslims are agreed that in a case like this each scholar is to be rewarded by God, whether his opinion is right or wrong. This is based on the tradition which is reported in the canonical collections, in which the prophet is reported to have said, "If a judge gives a verdict according to his own discretion and his verdict is correct, he will receive a double reward, and if he gives a verdict according to his own discretion and his verdict is wrong, even then he will get a reward."¹⁴²

It would take us too far afield to examine all the traditions that the scholars used to argue for or against samāʿ. Thus, the traditions which Ibn Taymiyya quoted will be discussed as examples of the ones used by those who prohibited samāʿ. Examples of the ones used by the other party will be given.

To argue against the permissibility of samāʿ Ibn Taymiyya quoted the following two traditions:

1. It is reported on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās that the prophet said, "The devil said, 'My Lord, grant me a residence.' The Lord said, 'The (public) bath is your residence.' The devil then said, 'Grant me a Qur'ān.' The Lord said, 'Poetry is your Qur'ān.' The devil then said, 'Grant me a muezzin.' The Lord said, 'The mizmār (wood-wind instrument resembling the oboe) is your muezzin.'"143

Though Ibn Taymiyya refers to this tradition as a prophetic one, his disciple Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziya states that it is well-known that this tradition is a mawqūf,¹⁴⁴ that is to say it does not go back to the prophet, i.e. it is a saying of Ibn ʿAbbās, the prophet's companion. However, some other prophet's companions, for example ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar and ʿAbd Allāh b. Jaʿfar, are reported to have practised samāʿ.¹⁴⁵

2. The prophet is reported to have said, "I have prohibited but two sounds which are dumb and are of debauchery: An entertaining voice accompanied with the sound of the mizmār of Satan, and the sound of slapping cheeks and tearing clothes while crying out as people did in pre-Islamic times (when someone dies)."¹⁴⁶ It is clearly stated in this tradition that the prophet prohibited these sounds because they cause people to lose virtue. The Ṣūfīs argue that their samāʿ leads to the opposite.¹⁴⁷ In this connection they quote a statement which is attributed to Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal in which he is reported to have said, "'I do not know people who are better than the Ṣūfīs.' Then it was said to him, 'They practise samāʿ and wajd ("ecstasy").' He said, 'Let them rejoice at the presence of Allāh.'"148

Examples of the traditions which are used by the other party to argue for the permissibility of samāʿ are the following:

1. It is reported on the authority of ^ʿAmr b. al-Sharīd that he said, "One day I rode behind the prophet and he said to me, 'Do you remember some of the poems of 'Umayya b. Abī al-Salt?' I said, 'Yes.' The prophet said, 'Hīh (let it fall).'

So, I recited a verse to him. Then the prophet said, 'Hīh.' So, I recited another verse to him, and it went like that between me and the prophet until I had recited to him a hundred verses."¹⁴⁹

2. It is reported on the authority of Sa^ʿīd b. al-Musayyab (d.94/712) that he said, "^ʿUmar came to the Mosque (of the prophet in Medina) while Ḥassān b. Thābit (d.40,50 or 54/660,670 or 673) was reciting a poem. Then Ḥassān said to ^ʿUmar, 'I used to recite poetry in this very Mosque in the presence of one (i.e. the prophet) who is better than you.' Then Ḥassān turned to Abū Hurayra and said (to him), 'I ask you by Allāh, did you hear the messenger of God saying (to me), "Reply (in verse) on my behalf! O Allāh! Support him (i.e. Ḥassān) with the Holy Spirit!"?' Abū Hurayra said, 'Yes.'"¹⁵⁰

3. The tradition in which it is reported that the prophet and some of his companions listened to the poem which is ascribed to Ka^ʿb b. Zuhayr. This poem contains words of love and description of Ka^ʿb's beloved woman. In it Ka^ʿb says:

"Su^ʿād is gone, and today my heart is love-sick, in thrall to her, unrequited, bound with chains;

And Su^ʿād, when she came forth on the morn of departure, was but a gazelle with bright black downcast eyes."

Ka^ʿb goes on till he says:

I was told that the messenger of Allāh threatened me (with death), but with the messenger of Allāh I have hope of finding pardon."¹⁵¹

In another report it is said that when Ka^ʿb recited the verse in which he says, "Truly the messenger is a light whence illumination is sought - a drawn Indian sword, one of the swords of Allāh", the prophet gave him his outer garment (burda).¹⁵²

4. The tradition which is reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim in their Ṣaḥīḥs. In it

ʿĀ'isha, the prophet's wife, is reported to have said, "The messenger of God entered my room while two girls were singing beside me the songs of Buḥāth (songs about the war between the two tribes of the Anṣār, the Khazraj and the Aws, before Islam). The prophet lay down and turned his face to the other side. Then Abū Bakr came and spoke to me harshly saying, 'Musical instruments of Satan near the prophet!' The messenger of God turned his face towards him and said, 'Leave them'."¹⁵³

5. The tradition in which Ibn ʿAbbās (d.68/687) is reported to have said, "ʿĀ'isha gave a woman relative of hers among the Anṣār (the Medinan followers of Muḥammad who granted him refuge after the Hegira) in marriage and God's messenger came and said, 'Have you escorted the girl to her husband?' On being told that they had, he asked whether they had sent someone along with her to sing, and when she replied that they had not, he said, 'The Anṣār are a people who give a place to love songs. I wish you had sent with her someone to say, 'We have come to you, we have come to you; so may God preserve us and preserve you'."¹⁵⁴

7.10. Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on the Ṣūfīs' practice of "solitary retreat" (khalwa).

In Ibn Taymiyya's opinion, "solitary retreat" is one of the acts of devotion which are not grounded in the Shariʿa (ʿibādāt ghayr mashrūʿa), in other words the acts which have been invented in the Muslim community after the time of the prophet. He argues that khalwa should not be likened to the legitimate practice of iḥtikāf, as iḥtikāf is to go into retreat in a mosque, while khalwa is to go into complete isolation. He strongly criticises the usage by the Ṣūfīs of the prophetic practice of "solitary retreat" in Hirāʾ¹⁵⁵ to argue for the legitimacy of this practice. He says in this connection:

"To argue for the legitimacy of khalwāt (pl. of khalwa), some Ṣūfīs quote

the reports in which it is said that the prophet used to perform works of devotion in the cave of Ḥirā' before the beginning of the revelation. This (argument) is wrong, as we should follow the prophet's example in the acts which he performed before the beginning of the revelation, only if the legitimacy of these acts was confirmed after the beginning of the revelation. From the time that the revelation started, the prophet never went to the cave of Ḥirā'; nor did the four Caliphs."¹⁵⁶

It is odd that Ibn Taymiyya, who is known to have extraordinarily impressive knowledge of ḥadīth, should say the preceding about the practice of khalwa, when a tradition which is reported in al-Bukhārī's Ṣaḥīḥ and Ibn Māja's Sunan explicitly encourages this practice. In this tradition Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī is reported to have said that a Bedouin came to the prophet and said to him, "'O messenger of Allāh! Who is the best of mankind?' The prophet said, 'A man who strives for Allāh's cause with his life and property, and a man (who lives in seclusion) on some mountain path to worship his Lord (wa rajul fī shiʿb min 'al-shiʿāb yaʿbud rabbahu) and save the people from the evil that he might cause them (when living amongst them).'"¹⁵⁷ In spite of the fact that in both Bukhārī's and Ibn Māja's versions it is not clearly stated that this man lives in seclusion, this is understood from the context. In fact one could quote another version of this tradition in which one could find a convincing proof of the preceding opinion. This is Ibn Ḥanbal's version in which it is said, "Mu'min iʿtazal fī shiʿb min al-shiʿāb". This reads in translation: A believer who lives in seclusion (iʿtazal) on some mountain path.¹⁵⁸

7.11. The Ṣūfī hierarchy

Ibn Taymiyya's stand with regard to this subject is that he neither unrestrictedly accepts it nor fully rejects it. He states that names such as al-ghawth ("recourse"), al-awṭād ("pegs"), al-aqṭāb (poles), al-abdāl ("substitutes") and al-nujabā' ("the noble") are found neither in the Qur'ān nor in the prophetic traditions. He acknowledges that al-abdāl are mentioned in a tradition which is reported on the authority of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and is claimed to go back to the prophet. In this

tradition it is reported, "The people of Syria were mentioned in ʿAlī's presence and someone said, 'Curse them, commander of the faithful.' He refused, saying he had heard God's messenger say, 'The substitutes, a body of forty men, will be in Syria, and as often as one dies God will put another in his place. By virtue of them rain will be provided, by virtue of them victory over the enemy will be achieved, and by virtue of them affliction will be averted from the Syrians.'"¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Ibn Taymiyya states that the isnād (chain of transmitters) on which this tradition is based is a munqaṭiʿ ("an isnād from which a name has disappeared").¹⁶⁰ Then he states that it is most likely that this tradition was not said by the prophet. To support this opinion he gives an argument which can be summarised in the following:

1. The Hejaz and Yemen were first to accept Islam, while Syria and Iraq remained for a long time as territories of non-believers. Hence, how can it be accepted that the abdāl always existed only in Syria?
2. In a genuine tradition, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī is reported to have said that the prophet said, "A group would emerge from the (two) different parties of Muslims. From these (two different parties), the party which is near to the truth will kill the emerging group."¹⁶¹ It is believed that the Khawārij is the emerging group which is referred to in this tradition, and that the two different parties are ʿAlī's and Muʿāwīya's.¹⁶² Ibn Taymiyya confirms that ʿAlī's party was the one nearer to the truth. He adds that Syria was the territory of Muʿāwīya's party, not ʿAlī's party (which was better than Muʿāwīya's party). Thus it is not logical to say that al-abdāl, who are the best of Muslims, were only in Syria.¹⁶³

This implies that Ibn Taymiyya was not against the idea of the existence of al-abdāl, and that he did not disapprove of their spiritual superiority. It shows that he was only against the belief that they existed in Syria only.

Ibn Taymiyya concludes his discussion of the concept of the Ṣūfī hierarchy, the names and the numbers which are involved in it¹⁶⁴ by saying that it is wrong to believe that such a construction existed in the same manner at all times. In general

he believed that it is wrong to believe in this concept as a whole or to reject it as a whole.¹⁶⁵

Ibn Taymiyya's claim that the names, ghawth, awtād and nujabā' are not found in the prophetic traditions can be challenged by the following:

1. It is reported on the authority of ^عAlī that the prophet said, "Every prophet before me was given a body of seven persons, nuqabā' ("chieftains"), wuzarā' (viziers) and nujabā' ("the noble"), while I have been given a body of fourteen persons, wuzarā', nuqabā' and nujabā'. Seven of them are from the Koreish tribe, the other seven are from al-muhājirīn ("those Meccans who emigrated to Medina in the early period of Islam")."¹⁶⁶

2. It is reported on the authority of Abū Hurayra that the prophet said, "In the mosques there are awtād ("pegs"), whose companions are the angels. If they (the awtād) are absent, the angels look for them; if they are ill, the angels visit them and if they need help the angels help them."¹⁶⁷

3. ^عUthmān b. Ḥanīf, the prophet's companion, is reported to have said that he heard the prophet giving a long speech about al-dajjal ("the Muslim anti-Christ") at the end of which the prophet said, "Muslims will suffer from a severe famine...and while they are in this state they will hear at dawn a caller calling, 'O people! al-Ghawth ("the recourse") has come to you.' This call will be repeated three times...then at the time of ṣalāt al-fajr (morning ritual prayer) Jesus, son of Mary, will descend (from heaven to earth)."¹⁶⁸

I should also mention another tradition in which al-abdāl are mentioned and are shown to be in Syria. In this tradition, Umm Salama, the prophet's wife, is reported to have said that the prophet said, "Conflict will break out at the death of one Caliph. Then a man from Medina will escape to Mecca. In Mecca, a group of Meccans will come to this man and take him against his will to a place between al-rukṇ and al-maqām¹⁶⁹, where they will take the oath of allegiance to him. A group of Syrians will revolt against him, (and while they are on their way to fight him) God will make them sink into the ground. Seeing this the abdāl of Syria and the

people of Iraq will come to him and take the oath of allegiance to him."¹⁷⁰

However, the preceding traditions serve only to demonstrate that the previously specified names appeared in the prophetic traditions. As far as this investigation is concerned, the other names which are involved in the Ṣūfī hierarchy are not found in the prophetic traditions. Moreover, our chances of proving that the Ṣūfī hierarchy, with its known construction, exists at all times by means of prophetic tradition are nil.

7.12. Notes

1. G. Makdisi, 'Ibn Taymiyya a Ṣūfī of The Qādiriyya Order', in American Journal of Arabic Studies, Leiden, 1973, vol.1, p.119.
2. Ibid., p.122.
3. Ibid., pp.119-20.
4. al-Anṣārī al-Harawī (d.1089), the author of the well-known Arabic work Manāzil al-Sā'irīn. He is one of the earliest and most prominent Persian mystics, and is said to be of Arab descent.
5. ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, a Ḥanbalī follower and the supposed founder of the Qādiriyya Brotherhood after whom the Brotherhood was named. He was born in Jīlān in Persia in 470/1077. When he was 18 years old he emigrated to Baghdad to study. There he studied Muslim jurisprudence according to the school of Ibn Ḥanbal (and according to the school of al-Shāfiʿī in some reports) under the supervision of many Ḥanbalī scholars. Then he studied Ṣūfism under the supervision of Abu'l-Khayr Muḥammad b. Muslim al-Dabbās (d.525/1131). Later he was invested with the Ṣūfī cloak by Abū Saʿd Mubārak al-Mukharrimī. "In 521/1127, on the advice of the Ṣūfī Yūsuf al-Hamadhānī (d.435/1140), he began to preach in public," and soon became so popular that a ribāṭ was built for him. In 528/1133-34, he was appointed head of the school of Mubārak al-Mukharrimī. He died in 561/1166 in Baghdad; see E.I.², article 'ʿAbd al-Kādir al-Djīlānī or (al-Djīlī)'.

6. For more details on this point see Makdisi, 'Ibn Taymiyya A Ṣūfī of The Qādiriyya order', pp.120-6.
7. The Wahhābiyya is "a Muslim community", called after its founder Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1115-1201/1703-1787). The Wahhābīs claim to be followers of the school of Ibn Ḥanbal, as viewed by Ibn Taymiyya. They are extremely hostile to the Ṣūfī doctrines of walāya and Ṣūfī practices in general; see S.E.I., article 'Wahhābiyya'.

The Salafiyya is a religious movement which flourished in Egypt at the beginning of this century. Its aim was "to reform and restate (the) medieval doctrines (of Islam) in order to make them applicable to the modern world." See Malcolm H. Kerr, Islamic Reform, Berkeley, 1966, pp.2-3.

For the links between the two preceding movements and the teachings of Ibn Taymiyya see Laoust (Henry), Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques de Takī-d-dīn Aḥmad b. Taymiyya, Cairo, 1939, pp.506-40 and 541-75.

8. This is an edition by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (1865-1935), a Syrian scholar, and a leading member of the Salafiyya movement who was greatly influenced by the teachings of Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1849-1905).
9. This is a work "by the Hanbalī Yūsuf b. ʿAbd al-Hādī entitled Bad' al-ʿUlqa bi-Lubs al-Khirqa, preserved in the Firestone Library of Princeton University." Makdisi, 'Ibn Taymiyya a Ṣūfī of The Qādiriyya Order', p.124.
10. Ibid, p.123.
11. While he praises these Hanbalī Ṣūfīs, "Ibn Taymiyya censures his fellow Hanbalī, the great Ṣūfī ʿAbd Allāh al-Harawī, and suspects him of duplicity. This attitude of Ibn Taymiyya regarding al-Anṣārī al-Harawī contrasts, in turn, with that of his disciple Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziya." Ibid., p.126.
12. Ibid., p.127; Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.186.
13. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.153.
14. Ibid., vol.2, p.153; Muḥammad ʿUmar Memon, Ibn Taymiyya's Struggle Against Popular Religion, The Hague, 1976, p.70.
15. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, pp.153-4; Memon, op.cit, p.70.
16. See Chap.2, p.50; Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.70.
17. Ibid., vol.2, p.155; see Chap.6, p.187.
18. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.155; see Chap.6, p.187; cf. Ibn ʿArabī's opinion on the distinction between shahāda ("witnessing") and ru'yā ("vision"), in Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, p.227.
19. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, pp.154-5; Memon, op.cit, p.70.

20. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.154; see Chap.6, p.187.
21. Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, p.265.
22. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, pp.154-5.
23. Ṣāriya b. Zanīm, one of the prophet's companions; see Ibn al-Athīr, op.cit., vol.2, p.244.
24. al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, al-Riyāḍ al-Nadira fī Manāqib al-ʿAshara, Beirut, 1984, vol.2, pp.326-7; Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.157.
25. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.157; al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, op.cit, vol.1, p.189.
26. al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, op.cit., vol.2, p.328; Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p. 157.
27. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.157; The Qur'ān: 18:74, 80.
28. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.157; The Qur'ān: 3:37.
29. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.157; The Qur'ān: 27:40.
30. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.157; al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, op.cit, vol.2, p.328.
31. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.153.
32. Ibid., vol.2, p.159-60; Memon, op.cit, pp.70-1.
33. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, pp.166-7; Graham, op.cit, p.173.
34. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.167; E.I.², article 'Firāsa'.
35. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.167.
36. al-Maṣāliḥ al-mursala is the plural of maṣlaḥa mursala, and it is a technical term associated with istiṣlāḥ, one of the sources of Muslim jurisprudence. Istiṣlāḥ is to rule in accordance with al-maṣlaḥa al-mursala ("public welfare"), in other words istiṣlāḥ is to rule "in favour of public welfare". See S.E.I, article 'Fikh'.
37. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.175.
38. Makdisi, 'Ibn Taymiyya a Ṣūfī of The Qādiriyya Order', p.128; Kerr, op.cit, p.192,244.
39. Cf. Chap.2, pp.60-3.
40. See Chap.2, p.49.
41. Ibn Taymiyya, al-Nubuwwāt, Riyad, 1346/1927, p.167.

42. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.199.
43. See Chap.3, pp.81-3.
44. See Chap.2, p.51.
45. See Chap.6, p.188.
46. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.64.
47. Ibid., vol.2, p.63; see Chap.6, p.188.
48. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.1, P36.
49. Ibid., vol.1, p.36.
50. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.64.
51. Ibn Taymiyya devoted a whole work to argue against this claim. This work is entitled Maḥārīj al-Wuṣūl, and is found in his Majmūʿat Rasā'il which is referred to earlier.
52. Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.1, p.416; ʿAffifī, op.cit., p.101.
53. See Chap.2, pp.50-1.
54. ʿAffifī, op.cit, p.101; Ibn ʿArabī, Fut, vol.1, p.416.
55. Izutsu, op.cit., pp.271-2; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, pp.63-4.
56. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, pp.66-7.
57. ʿAffifī, op.cit, p.99.
58. Izutsu, op.cit, p.267; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, pp.135-6.
59. Izutsu, op.cit, p.272; Qāshānī, op.cit., p.36.
60. ʿAffifī, op.cit, p.94; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.134.
61. In this connection Ibn ʿArabī quotes the Qur'ān 2:257; 42:28, where Allāh names himself walī. See Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, p.135.
62. ʿAffifī, op.cit, pp.94-5; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, p.135-6.
63. Izutsu, op.cit, pp.264-5; Ibn ʿArabī, Fus, vol.1, pp.135-6.
64. See Chap.6, p.188.
65. See Chap.2, pp.57-8.
66. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.11; see Chap.3, p.99.
67. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.8, p.287; Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2,

p.12.

68. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.12.
69. See for example The Qur'ān 32:7, 38:71.
70. Graham, op.cit, pp.161-62.
71. Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī called Jāmi^c al-Bayān ^can Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān, edited with notes by M. Shākir, Cairo, 1954-, vol.13, p.236.
72. Ibid., vol.13, p.236.
73. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, pp.225-6; Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.10.
74. See Chap.3, pp.85-97.
75. See Chap.6, p.182.
76. Ibn Taymiyya, al-Nubuwwāt, p.83.
77. See Chap.2, p.57.
78. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.105.
79. Ibid., vol.2, p.105; Ibn ^cArabī, Fut, vol.1, p.292.
80. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.105.
81. Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, p.393; Ibn ^cArabī, Fut, Cairo, 1293, vol.2, p.73.
82. Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, p.437.
83. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.107; W. C. Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Love, New York, 1983, p.163.
84. See Chap.2, p.51; Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.107.
85. Ibid., vol.2, p.107.
86. Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, pp.125, and 437; Ibn ^cArabī, Fut, Cairo, 1293, vol.2, pp.409-10.
87. See Chap.2, p.45.
88. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.116.
89. Baldick, Mystical Islam, p.84.
90. Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, p.176; Ibn ^cArabī, Fut, Cairo, 1293, vol.2, pp.728-9.

91. Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, p.325.
92. See Chap.2, pp.46-7.
93. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.116.
94. See Chap.2, p.46.
95. See Chap.3, p.118, note 121.
96. Victor E. Makari, Ibn Taymiyya's Ethics, The Social Factor, Chico, 1983, pp.34-5.
97. An example of the attributes of negation (ṣifāt al-nafy) is "no slumber can seize him (lā ta'khudhuhu sina wa lā nawm)". An example of the attributes of affirmation is "the hearing". See Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziya, Madārij al-Ṣālikīn, Beirut, 1972. pp.24-8.
98. Memon, op.cit, p.398.
99. Ibn Taymiyya, al-Risāla al-Tadmuriyya, Cairo, 1325/1907, pp.4-5.
100. See Chap.3, pp.108-09.
101. Ibid., p.109.
102. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, pp.210-11; for the sources of the tradition see Chap.2, p.54.
103. Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.1, p.252; see Chap.6, p.189.
104. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.211.
105. Chittick, The Ṣūfī Path of Knowledge, pp.3-4; see also Maḥmūd Maḥmūd al-Ghurāb, Sharḥ Kalimāt al-Ṣūfiyya wa'l-Radd ʿalā Ibn Taymiyya, Damascus, 1981, pp.48-50.
106. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, pp.139-40.
107. See Chap.6, p.180.
108. Memon, op.cit, p.15.
109. Ibid., p.15; Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.73.
110. Ibn Taymiyya, Iqtidā' al-Ṣirāt al-Mustaḳīm Mukhālafat Aṣḥāb al-Jāḥim, Cairo, 1907, p.149; Memon, op.cit, p.21.
111. M. J. Kister, Studies in Jāhiliyya and Early Islam, London, 1980, pp.173-5.

112. "ʿArafa or ʿArafāt, plain about 21 km. east of Mecca, on the road to Ta'if, bounded on the north by a mountain-bridge of the same name. The plain is the site of the central ceremonies of the annual Pilgrimage to Mecca." E.I.², article 'ʿArafa'.
113. ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Kāfī, al-Subkī, Taqī al-Dīn, Shifā' al-Siqām fī Ziyārat Khayr al-Anām, Beirut, 1963, pp.118-9.
114. Ibrāhīm b. ʿUthmān, al-Samnūdī, Saʿādat al-Dārayn fi'l-Radd ʿala'l-Firqatayn, Cairo, 1319/1901, p.121.
115. Ibid., p.121.
116. Kister, op.cit., p.176.
117. Muḥammad Abū Zahra, Ibn Taymiyya, Cairo, 1946, pp.325-8.
118. Subkī, Shifā' al-Siqām, p.2; ʿAlī b. ʿUmar al-Dāraqutnī, al-Sunan, Cairo, 1966, vol.2, p.278.
119. Subkī, Shifā' al-Siqām, pp.2-14; for other reports on the same subject see ibid., pp.15-40.
120. Ibid., pp.52-5; Ibn ʿAsākir, Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq, Amman, n.d., vol.3, p.468.
121. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.2, p.672; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.1, p.369.
122. Ibn Taymiyya, al-Wāṣita bayn al-Khalq wa'l-Ḥaqq, Beirut, 1908, p.12; Memon, op.cit, p.19.
123. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.1, p.66.
124. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, pp.15-17.
125. See Chap.6, p.190.
126. Ibid., p.190.
127. Ibid., p.190; Memon, op.cit, p.161.
128. See Chap.6, p.190.
129. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.10, pp.32-3.
130. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.18.
131. al-Ṭabarānī, op.cit., vol.9, pp.17-18.

132. Tirmidhī, op.cit., vol.10, p.7.
133. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, pp.1968-9.
134. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.19.
135. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.2, p.257; Subkī, Shifā' al-Siqām, p.196.
136. Subkī, Shifā' al-Siqām, p.197.
137. Ibid., p.205; Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.1, p.370; Ḥākim, op.cit., vol.3, p.61.

"The tradition refers to the time after the death of the prophet and Abū Bakr who were buried in ʿĀ'isha's house. When ʿUmar died he was buried beside them. As ʿĀ'isha was not related to him she felt that she must observe the usual convention regarding men who were not near relatives, even though ʿUmar was dead."

Tibrizī, op.cit., vol.1, p.370.

138. Subkī, Shifā' al-Siqām, pp.196-206.
139. Memon, op.cit., p.372.
140. See Chap.6, p.190.
141. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.23; on the same practice see Chap.2, p.50, tradition No.24.
142. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.9, p.330.
143. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.69; see Chap.6, p.190.
144. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Ighāthat al-Lahfān, vol.1, p.251.
145. al-Saffārīnī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, Ghidhā' al-Albāb li-Sharḥ Manzūmat al-Ādāb, Riyad, 1971, vol.1, p.162.
146. See Chap.6, p.191.
147. al-Saffārīnī, op.cit., vol.1, p.160; cf. Ibn Taymiyya's opinion on the Ṣūfīs' wajd, pp.203-04 of this Chapter.
148. al-Saffārīnī, op.cit., vol.1, p.152.
149. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.4, p.1767.
150. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.4, p.292; for examples of similar

nature see Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, the book of 'Ādāb', the section of Poetry, and A. Guillaume, The life of Muḥammad. A translation of Ishāq's Ṣīrat Rasūl Allāh, Oxford, 1955, pp.306-7.

151. Guillaume, The life of Muḥammad, pp.597-601.
152. al-Saffārīnī, op.cit, vol.1, p.179.
153. Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, Arabic-English, vol.2, p.37.
154. Ibn Māja, op.cit., vol.1, pp.612-13; Tibrīzī, op.cit., vol.2, p.670.
155. "A mountain three Arabian miles to the north east of Mecca...Muḥammad is said to have been in the habit of spending a month each year in a cave on Hira' engaged in tahannuth, presumably some form of religious devotion."
- See E.I.², article 'Hira'.
156. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.2, p.247.
157. al-Bukhārī, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.7, p.188; Ibid., Arabic-English, vol.8, p.331; Ibn Māja, op.cit., vol.2, pp.1316-17.
158. Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.3, p.56.
159. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.57; Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit., vol.1, p.112.
160. Guillaume, The Traditions of Islam, p.182.
161. Muslim, The Ṣaḥīḥ, vol.2, p.745.
162. It is believed that this tradition refers to the conflict between ʿAlī and Muʿāwīya in connection with Imāma ("supreme leadership of the Muslim community"). See E.I.², article 'Imāma'.
163. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, p.61.
164. Ibid., vol.1, p.57; see also Baldick, Mystical Islam, p.39.
165. Ibn Taymiyya, MRM, vol.1, pp.57-8.
166. Ibn Ḥanbal, op.cit, vol.1, p.88.
167. Ibid., vol.5, p.418.
168. Ibid., vol.4, pp.216-17.
169. Two locations at the Holy Shrine in Mecca.

170. Abū Dāwūd, op.cit., vol.4, pp.107-8.

In spite of the fact that the "substitutes" are referred to in many prophetic traditions, recent research has shown that the concept of the "substitutes" was originally found in Judaism. However, neither Jewish tradition nor Muslim tradition has agreed upon their number or the way they fit into the mystical hierarchy; see Julian Baldick, Imaginary Muslims, London, 1993, pp.30-1.

Conclusions

The encouragement of learning through the establishment of the colleges and the promotion of the status of the ʿulamā' was a policy which was followed by the rulers during the period in question in order to secure their rule. Because of the religious awakening among the people, stimulated by the Crusades, the internal disputes and the anti-Shīʿism movement, this policy found great success, the result of which was the flourishing of learning in the full sense of the word.

The period in question was also characterised by a general collaboration between the ʿulamā', in particular those who were Ṣūfīs, and the rulers. Three factors led to this collaboration; 1. The fact that the ʿulamā' depended on salaried teaching posts for a living. 2. The prevalence of the Ashʿarite doctrine, according to which total obedience to the ruler is required. 3. The influence of Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of "the unity of existence", according to which whatever occurs in the universe is a manifestation of the Divine Attributes.

This collaboration resulted on the one hand in the promotion of the status of the ʿulamā', in particular those who were Ṣūfīs, and on the other hand in the isolation of the Ḥanbalite followers who rejected the teachings of al-Ashʿarī.

This study proves that the general concept which says that the school of Ibn Ḥanbal is an anti-Ṣūfism institution is not realistic. However, the fact that there was a general collaboration between Ṣūfīs and rulers during this time resulted in great hostility between the followers of this school and some Ṣūfīs. This is mirrored in Ibn Taymiyya's vigorous attacks against Ibn ʿArabī and his followers.

Ibn ʿArabī owes the success which he achieved in Damascus to the support given to him by the rulers and the jurists of this city. During his stay in Damascus he compiled his two most important works, Fuṣūṣ al-Hikam and al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya. A great number of traditions is found in these two works. A considerable number of these traditions is found in the collections of ḥadīth which Muslims consider canonical. But at the same time the number of those which are

not found in these collections is not negligible. Not only are these traditions not found in the canonical collections, but some of them are declared fabricated by some ḥadīth-experts. Examples of these traditions are: 1. The tradition in which God speaks in the first person and says, "I was an unknown treasure, and loved to be known, so I created the creatures, and made myself known to them, so, by me they knew me." This tradition represents the corner-stone of Ibn ʿArabī's theory of "the unity of existence". 2. The tradition which is claimed to be a prophetic one in which the prophet is made to say, "The learned of this community are equal to the prophets of the children of Israel." This tradition plays a considerable role in Ibn ʿArabī's concept of the walāya (Friendship with God). Ibn ʿArabī was aware of the fact that the authenticity of these traditions cannot be proved through the established methods of the criticism of ḥadīth. Therefore, he tried to justify his use of these traditions by arguing that their authenticity has been established by means of "unveiling" (kashf). Ibn ʿArabī's idea that the authenticity of ḥadīth can be established by means of "unveiling" is based mainly on a prophetic tradition which is found in the canonical collections. This idea might be supported by the fact that there is a similarity between it and the usual view of the case of the isolated tradition (khabar al-wāḥid). A tradition of this type constitutes a decisive argument in the opinion of the majority of ḥadīth scholars. However, for Muslim scholars, accepting Ibn ʿArabī's claim that he was informed of the authenticity of these reports by the prophet Muḥammad through a "heralding vision" depends mainly on their reaching an agreement on Ibn ʿArabī's trustworthiness. This is by no means possible for them.

This study shows that Ibn ʿArabī had a great mental capacity, which he used to the full when interpreting the traditions to suit his purposes, sometimes by playing with the lexical meanings of the words in the texts and sometimes by exploiting their grammatical ambiguity. This is well demonstrated in his interpretation of the Qur'ānic verse, "There is nothing like unto him and he is the hearing, the seeing", which he uses as the corner-stone in his interpretation of the

traditions which refer to the subject of tanzīh and tashbīh (transcendence and anthropomorphism). Another example of the preceding is his interpretation of the tradition, "God created Adam in his form", in which he makes a significant use of the grammatical ambiguity of the personal pronoun which is used in this ḥadīth. Moreover, Ibn ʿArabi's interpretation of some of the traditions is odd. This interpretation can be supported neither by the grammar nor by the sayings of the predecessors, let alone the fact that these traditions are not found in the canonical collections. His explanation of this is that such an interpretation is given to him by means of "unveiling". An example of this is his interpretation of the tradition, "There is no verse of the Qur'ān which does not have a literal meaning, a hidden meaning, a limit, and a place to which one may ascend".

In spite of the great effort which Ibn ʿArabi made to convince the reader that his concepts were drawn mainly from the Qur'ān and the ḥadīth, and that he came to know the unusual interpretations which he offers for certain Qur'ānic verses and traditions through "unveiling", academic research shows that he was much influenced by earlier Ṣūfī literature.

In contrast to Ibn ʿArabi, Ibn Taymiyya was rigorous in sticking mainly to the traditions which are reported in one of the six canonical collections. These are the collections of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasā'ī, al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Māja. He rarely quotes traditions from the other collections. These are the ones which are referred to in Chapter 6. They are the collections which Ibn Taymiyya accepts as canonical. Although these sources are considered lower in the degree of authenticity than the six canonical ones, they are still regarded as standard collections of ḥadīth in Muslim scholarly circles.

This study proves that Ibn Taymiyya's traditional image, which Muslim and early non-Muslim historians have co-operated in building up, is not entirely realistic. This image presents Ibn Taymiyya as a scholar who is totally against Ṣūfism and the Ṣūfīs. The incorrectness of this image is demonstrated in Chapter 7, where Ibn Taymiyya quotes and interprets the prophetic traditions to argue that

certain Ṣūfī concepts and practices are in conformity with the teachings of Islam. These are the concepts of the karāmāt (charisms), ilhām (mystical inspiration) and kashf ("unveiling"), and the practices of seeking the intercession of the righteous in their lifetime, and using the ruqā (spells). However, Ibn Taymiyya does not agree with the Ṣūfīs in all the details of these concepts. For example he does not believe that the correctness of the knowledge which is perceived by means of "unveiling" is always guaranteed. He also rejects the claim by the Ṣūfīs and the Shīʿites that the prophet Muḥammad entrusted some of his companions with a secret knowledge which he did not reveal to the others. The influence of Ṣūfism on Ibn Taymiyya is also seen in his views concerning the Ṣūfī hierarchy, a concept which he neither unrestrictedly accepts nor fully rejects.

Using ḥadīth, Ibn Taymiyya fiercely attacks and rejects Ibn ʿArabī's concepts of "the unity of existence" and the Seal of the Friends of God, and also Ibn ʿArabī's combination of transcendence and anthropomorphism with respect to the Divine Attributes. He rejects some of the traditions which Ibn ʿArabī uses to establish these concepts on the ground that their authenticity cannot be proved through the established methods of the criticism of ḥadīth. He rejects Ibn ʿArabī's interpretation of the traditions which are found in the canonical collections and offers a different one. With regard to the subject of transcendence and anthropomorphism, Ibn Taymiyya believes that the Qur'ānic verse, "There is nothing like unto him and he is the hearing, the seeing" implies transcendence and nothing else. Therefore, he believes that all the prophetic traditions which deal with this subject should be interpreted as supporting the idea of God's transcendence.

Ibn Taymiyya went to the extreme by declaring some Ṣūfī practices prohibited or not grounded in the Sharīʿa. Examples of these practices are the visitation to the tombs (ziyārat al-qubūr), in particular that of the prophet Muḥammad, the practice of "solitary retreat" (khalwa) and the practice of "listening to poetry or music" (samāʿ). The majority of Muslims do not agree with

Ibn Taymiyya about his opinion with regard to the visitation to the tombs. His interpretation of the ḥadīth which he quotes to support his opinion on this practice has been challenged by a more convincing one. The practice of "solitary retreat", which Ibn Taymiyya declares not grounded in the Shariʿa, is actually praised in a prophetic tradition. This tradition is reported by al-Bukhārī, Ibn Māja and Ibn Ḥanbal. This goes against Ibn Taymiyya's declared principles with regard to the acceptance of ḥadīth. According to these principles such a ḥadīth constitutes a decisive argument. As for the practice of "listening to poetry or music", Ibn Taymiyya quotes only one tradition to argue against its permissibility. This study shows that this tradition does not go back to the prophet. It also shows that there are many traditions in the canonical collections which may be used to argue for the permissibility of samāʿ.

Benefiting from the fact that there are points on which Ibn Taymiyya severely attacked the Ṣūfīs and their teachings, the Wahhābiyya and the Salafiyya movements of our time, which are extremely hostile to the Ṣūfīs, used Ibn Taymiyya to gain popularity for their teachings. This is clearly seen in the way in which one Salafī edited Ibn Taymiyya's work Majmūʿat al-Rasā'il wa'l-Masā'il. Not only this, but the Wahhābīs claim that they are followers of the school of Ibn Ḥanbal, as viewed by Ibn Taymiyya. This study shows that this is not entirely true, as there are points on which Ibn Taymiyya's opinions are entirely different from those of the Wahhābīs.

Compared to Ibn ʿArabi and Ibn Taymiyya, Nawawī's course was a middle one. The great majority of the traditions used by him is found in the canonical and the standard collections of ḥadīth. Some of these traditions, however, are of the mursal type, i.e. traditions of the daʿīf (weak) category. This is in conformity with Nawawī's opinion that this type of traditions can be used in the faḍā'il (ethical behaviour), and in 'targhib and tarhib' (inspiring awe and arousing desire).

Nawawī's Ṣūfism is mainly ethical. This is demonstrated in the way in which he uses the prophetic traditions to discuss his opinions on sincerity and

truthfulness. Generally, his opinions on Ṣūfī concepts and practices are in conformity with the Sunna as established by the prophetic traditions. This is, however, with the exception of two opinions. First, his opinion that whenever a Friend of God carries out an action in which he violates Shariʿa law, or the rules of conducts as established by the Shariʿa, there should be either an explanation for it, or a hidden wisdom in it. Secondly, his opinion regarding marriage. He believes that it is recommended for the person who does not need to marry, and the person who does need to marry but cannot support a family, not to marry. The tradition which Nawawī uses to support this opinion is not found in the standard collections of ḥadīth. Moreover, it contradicts a number of traditions which are reported in the canonical collections. Therefore, it cannot be accepted.

In the light of the preceding it can be concluded that a number of the traditions which are used by the Ṣūfīs who lived during the period in question are not found in the ninth-century canonical collections of ḥadīth. Not only this, but some of these traditions are declared fabricated by the ḥadīth-experts. Nevertheless, a fair amount of the traditions used by the Ṣūfīs who lived during this period is found in the above-mentioned collections.

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